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## 'THE EPHEMERAL.'

### SOME MEMORIES OF OXFORD IN THE 'NINETIES.

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*The Ephemeral* would certainly not have gained such success as it did, had it not been for the presence in Oxford of Oscar Wilde ; and had it not been for *The Ephemeral*, I should probably never have made the acquaintance of that strange personality—and I should thereby have missed an interesting and amusing interlude. It was in the summer of 1893, when Oscar Wilde was at the zenith of his fame and Oxford at its most delicious.

Motoring through that venerable city a few days ago, I could not but be horror-struck by the changes that Time and Petrol have wrought since those spacious peaceful days—a roar of racing cars and motor-bicycles, the girding and grating of electric trams, policemen at the points controlling the traffic, armies of girls, cafés and tea-palaces, crowds of artisans and others obviously unconnected with the life of the University. The dreaming spires were still there, unchanged—but they looked down no longer on streets whose quiet was broken only by an occasional drowsy hansom-cab—but on the pandemonium of a Hammersmith Broadway or New Cross on a Saturday afternoon. And outside the magic circle of Colleges and Churches, instead of a few streets of the chaste Victorian domiciles of the married Dons, stretched miles of suburbs, model workmen's dwellings, and the houses of small tradesmen—a sorry setting for so precious a jewel. With profound admiration for the energy, industry, perhaps genius of Sir William Morris, one cannot but regret that Fate should have ordained that his incongruous activities should have begun and prospered in so sacred an environment.

We are all of us after a certain age inclined to become *laudatores temporis acti*, and to look back with sadness to an imagined Golden Age. To me the Golden Age at Oxford was in the early 'nineties, when there was leisure and space and, above all, quiet for the appreciation of those pleasant places in which our lines were for a year or two cast.

My first visit to Oxford was in 1888, when aged sixteen I went up to try—I need not say unsuccessfully—for a Balliol scholarship and stayed with Dr. Jowett, the ever-famous Master. He was my father's greatest friend and used to stay with us every summer in Scotland, much to the consternation of my mother and the rest of the family, who found his caustic little falsetto remarks and still more caustic silences not a little formidable. But with the insolence of youth I had no fear of him, and in consequence he liked me. He was the kindest of hosts, and on this and on other occasions on which I stayed with him, I was able to profit by an unusual flow of wit and wisdom from his store. He entertained considerably in those days, and on Saturday nights his dinner-parties combined with deliberate incongruity many of the most diametrically-opposite celebrities of the time. I remember, for instance, being present at a dinner when the chief guests were Dean Liddell, Dr. Martineau, the Unitarian, Professor Huxley, Miss Rhoda Broughton, the novelist, then regarded as terribly advanced and unreadable by the young, Lord and Lady Desborough and Miss Margot Tennant (now Lady Oxford and Asquith). It has been suggested that Jowett was in his way a snob, but this is far from the truth. He liked what are called the best people, because with their advantages of education, environment and travel, they are usually the best company—more interesting, entertaining and amusing than their less-fortunate fellows. But as Head of a great College, he had a much more serious purpose than this in his cultivation of the great. Those were still the days of privilege—and Jowett, knowing that those born to high position were also born to high responsibilities, desired to attract to Balliol as many young men of the great families as possible, in order to train them in the way they should go. There was no question of their leading an idle life of pleasure at Balliol, as at Christchurch or Magdalen. If they came to Balliol, they had to conform to Jowett's ideas of their proper preparation for the responsibilities ahead of them—or go. The late Lord Lansdowne, to cite one of innumerable cases, was an excellent example of the success of Jowett's theory. But the thing that struck one most in that remarkable character was his love of sincerity and abomination of all pretence. His historic snubs were all directed against sham of one kind or another. He was full of humour, but I cannot believe that he was the real author of the saying attributed to him that 'a story to be amusing must be either profane, indecent or malicious.' For he was intolerant of anything

verging on the indecent or profane and was never malicious. Although, as I have explained, he cultivated the great for special reasons, he also kept the doors of Balliol very wide open to the able poor, and many a needy student from Edinburgh and Glasgow owes a great subsequent career to his unfailing help and encouragement. One of the ordeals of those days was that one had to prepare and read an essay once a week, with two or three fellow-sufferers, to the Master in his sanctum. I remember two awe-inspiring occasions. On one a stupid and rather under-bred undergraduate had written an essay on 'Charitable Institutions,' full of the most terrible phrases, such as 'the cream of society,' which jarred on the Master both by the banality of its thought and the vulgarity of its diction. The reading finished and Jowett, after a long silence, said: 'I did not believe a member of this College could write such an essay. Write it again.' On the other, owing to grave preoccupation in the Parks and elsewhere, I had completely forgotten to write my essay by the time appointed. I did not dare to admit this—and being naturally of a fluent tongue, I decided on the desperate course of attempting to read aloud an *extempore* production, with a blank notebook in my hand. The subject was something about Civilisation and Poetry. I started with a swing and all went well for a minute or two. Then I got a little involved, and the Master asked me to re-read the last paragraph. That, of course, completely stymied me, and I had to confess that though I had given the subject much thought, I had not had time for the mechanical process of transmitting those thoughts to paper. He took it surprisingly well, but I left feeling pretty small, all the same.

I always regard it as my great good fortune that I was able to be at Balliol under that wise, kind and inspiring influence, and it was a very real sorrow to me when in my second year he came to his fatal illness. He lingered for a considerable time. One night, after he had been sitting silent and motionless for a long time propped up in his chair, one of the ladies who were tending him, Mrs. Green, the wife of the philosopher, I think, got up and tiptoed over to look at him. With a twinkle of his old humour, the falsetto voice at once snapped out: 'I am afraid it is very dull for you ladies, nothing happening.'

There were giants in those days—or so it seemed to us—both among the Dons and undergraduates. There was Dean Liddell with his stately grace, every inch of him attuned to his setting as Ruler of Wolsey's incomparable legacy. We often wondered for

how much of the great Liddell and Scott 'Lexicon' he was personally responsible. There was Brodrick, the Warden of Merton, a quaint, gaunt figure, his legs encased in trousers with straps, bumping up the High on a raw-boned chestnut. There was Raper of Trinity, the Mæcenas of Oxford, delicate, dilettante, a lover of the beautiful, full of sympathy for gilded youth, to whom he gave Lucullan dinners—knowing everything about every one. There were monumental scholars such as Paravicini and Forbes of Balliol, of whom it was written in the Masque of Balliol:

'What an oddity am I,  
Little cynic Paravi!  
Virgil I can shrilly render  
Cock-a-hoop upon the fender.'

and

'Oh, I say—I once was Forbes,  
Now the Master me absorbs—  
Me and many other MES  
In his great Thucydides.'

There was the historian, Bright, President of Univ. He was the victim of a terrible—but irresistibly humorous—outrage which fluttered the cloistered quiet of those days. His daughter's fiancé had apparently an entanglement with another person, who, blind with the fury of a woman scorned, called at the President's house, and finding no one there but the poor President himself, proceeded to shoot him in the stomach with a revolver. I am glad to say he recovered. But it was certainly a cruel chance that the sins of the prospective son-in-law should be thus visited on the unoffending potential father-in-law.

Amongst undergraduates there were rowing celebrities like Amphill, Guy and Vivian Nickalls, Rowe, Pilkington, Pitman, and the magnificent W. A. L. Fletcher, to mention only a few of those who year after year in those glorious days pulled the Oxford boat to victory. There were cricket geniuses like the Palairets and C. B. Fry, and Rugger bruisers like the mighty Fleming of Queen's and Conway-Rees of Jesus. There were budding men of letters like Max Beerbohm and Hilaire Belloc. There were gorgeous 'bloods' like Villiers and Cottenham. There were statesmen in the making, like Percy, Birkenhead, Hugh Cecil, and John Simon. But the list is inexhaustible. Believe me, that was the Golden Age.

One balmy night early in May, 1893, I was sitting in my rooms



in the Garden Quad at Balliol struggling with my father's edition of the *Ethics of Aristotle* and trying to absorb some of the staccato wisdom of that sage, when I heard my name shouted from below. Readily I hastened to the window to find Arthur Cunliffe, with face upturned on Titanic shoulders, hailing me. He said he had a brain-wave that required immediate discussion. Glad of the interruption, I invited him up, and when pipes were lit and the necessary refreshments had been provided, he proceeded to unfold his plan. It was, briefly, that we should jointly edit and publish a paper during the forthcoming Eights week. This would not only give scope to our literary talents but would also prove commercially profitable at a time when both of us were suffering from more than usual financial stringency. The experiment had many times before been tried, but the papers that had appeared were for the most part beneath contempt. Ours was to be on a different plane, combining news, wit, wisdom, and real literature with a good seasoning of personalities. I readily accepted the proposal and we turned forthwith to the important question of the title. What could be better than *The Ephemeral*—as the life of our paper was limited to but a day or two? Accepted with acclaim and resolved that Francis (now Sir Francis) Oppenheimer be invited to design a cover. This he did with supreme taste and imagination—a sun setting over the river with swarms of dragon-flies and other short-lived winged insects darting over bulrushes in the foreground—and the title in block letters athwart the page.

Then came the question of copy. It was decided daily to have an Editorial, a news page, literary contributions from the ablest pens, a column of 'Eavesdroppings'—or topical scandal and personalities—characters from handwriting, and correspondence.

'I wish,' I said, 'we had some obvious butt whom we could use as a sort of standing dish.'

'My dear fool,' said Cunliffe, 'Oscar Wilde is here in Oxford. What better could you want? We'll turn him down for a rare hunt.'

A publisher and printer were found in Alden & Co., in the Corn, whose terms were not too exorbitant and offered some margin of profit, and we got to work in earnest. On the day appointed all was ready, and with the proud eyes of successful motherhood, we saw, early on the 18th May, squads of newsboys with sheaves of our first-born under their arms rushing about the Broad, the Corn and the High proclaiming their wares. But the name was a stumbling-block to the untutored Oxford urchin, and its distortions were

painful to the parents—'The Emerald for the Boat-race,'—'The Emperor,'—'The He-female' were shrieked from street to street.

By a happy chance Cunliffe had carried out his fell design on Oscar Wilde in the first number—a witty, though perhaps too ruthless, exposure of the Wilde method. It was entitled 'Ossian Savage's new play' and began: 'Ossian Savage, a man of a coarse habit of body and of coarser habits of mind, was enjoying the cool summer morning in his own way strolling in Piccadilly. He was thinking out a new play: he, the successful playwright, was at his work, engaged with all his great ability in adding yet one more crown of wildest, most luxuriant olive to that head of his, which already threatened to strike the golden stars. He was composing the dialogue of the third act—not that he had even begun to think about the first and second acts—but that was his method. His play was progressing fast and well as usual, though it had not yet got a plot. The plot came afterwards in Ossian's plays with the "finishing touches." He had not yet conceived all his characters, but he was waiting for them to appear when the play was written: for the present they were merely algebraical signs— $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$ . But then  $x$  had already become sexed, and was a woman: and  $z$  was becoming more and more definite every moment.' The article ended with a soliloquy in which Wilde is represented as bewailing his difficulties:

"I have said so many dreadful things about woman and virtue and youth and the democracy and the aristocracy, I have hit the nail so often plump on the head, that it really is terribly difficult to be original. I am sometimes afraid my worst things have all been said, and the fairest notes on the Lyric lyre of immortality have been struck. Let me see: how can I hit woman *once* more? Might something like this do?

'X. "We women, Lord Z, have to live entirely in the Present: for we never have a Future, and we may not have a Past."

'Y. "Whereas, as a matter of fact, your thoughts are in the Past, and your hopes in the Future, while your despair is in the Present."

'Z. "Women with a Past are alone interesting. Not to have a Past is, for a woman, what ignorance of the world is for a man. I had rather be a bad woman than a good man."

'Shall I make Y a bride? Or shall it be a very young man to whom Z might say:

“Youth is said to be an excuse for vice : as a matter of fact, vice is the sole excuse for youth.”

And so on.

Of course to us to-day this kind of parody may seem very easy, perhaps banal—but remember that in 1893 the Wilde paradox was something quite new, and seemed to most of us amazingly clever. Even the ‘Green Carnation’ had not yet appeared, with its scathing exposure of the trick. For an undergraduate, therefore, Cunliffe’s satire was at the time regarded as a brilliant piece of work and was the talk of Oxford. It had, moreover, the immediate effect of stirring up Oscar Wilde’s coterie—perhaps even the author himself—and of driving one of his friends to take up the cudgels forthwith on his behalf. Lord Alfred Douglas dipped his pen in gall and sent the editors of *The Ephemeral* a good fighting reply for publication. This was exactly what we wanted. It started a full-blooded correspondence redolent of personalities, such as are dear to the heart of the Oxford youth. Our paper sold like wild-fire. For the remaining days pen crossed pen in inky combat, till gradually explanations were offered, expressions were withdrawn, and honour was satisfied.

Thereupon, Lord Alfred Douglas wrote to me and suggested that as there had obviously been lamentable misunderstandings, it was only fair and proper that I should meet Mr. Wilde and judge for myself whether the strictures on him and his work were in any way justified. Now it must be remembered that this was a considerable time before the deplorable scandal that shook and appalled the whole educated world. To the average healthy young man of those days Oscar Wilde appeared rather ridiculous and rather offensive simply in that he was a *poseur*, a mocker at such serious things as games and sport and training, an unwholesome influence with his gold-tipped cigarettes and his perpetual sneers, however clever they might be, at our Philistine ideals. His conceit appeared portentous : and his mode of dress bizarre. In a word, he had broken away from our standards : and having done so successfully amid the plaudits of a fascinated society, he was not negligible but a fit target for undergraduate wit. Beyond this somewhat commonplace prejudice there was, therefore, no real ground for refusing to meet Mr. Wilde : and, to tell the truth, having had our fun out of him, and reaped a considerable harvest thereby, I was much attracted by the idea of meeting some one of whom every one was talking, whose plays certainly appeared superhumanly clever and

whose Fairy Tales were as exquisitely simple as his paradoxes were complex and intriguing.

Accordingly I accepted Douglas's invitation and was bidden to meet Oscar Wilde the following night at dinner. At the hour appointed I went to Douglas's rooms in the High—pleasant, comfortable rooms, well lined with books. The company there assembled was a curious mixture. There was, of course, a preponderance of the perfectly dressed effeminate type, who did not play games, had their nails manicured and talked a good deal about 'the Yellow Book' and Verlaine. But there was also a sprinkling of men of coarser fibre like myself, who played Rugger, drank beer and smoked pipes. Our host introduced me to Wilde, who received me with a winning smile and made no allusion then or later to the circumstances that brought me there.

'I hear,' he said, 'that you are called "Gragger"' (the Oxford corruption of my name 'Grant,' cf. 'brekker,' 'soccer,' etc.). 'But this is dreadful. It must not go on. We must find a new name for you, something beautiful and worthy and Scottish.'

He was by then a heavy, rather gross figure, with a massive head. His face was lit with humour and the consciousness of immense intellectual reserves: but it was marred by a rabbit-mouth, which gave an impression of greed and weakness. His hands were large and beautifully shaped, and he made great play with them, and with enormous snowy cuffs, while he talked. The dinner was excellent, for in those days the cooking in the better-class lodgings at Oxford was far above the average of English cooking. Between each course, to my personal surprise and disgust, gold-tipped cigarettes were passed round and smoked by Wilde and the golden youth. At the end of dinner, I produced a cigar and was proceeding to light it, when my host in consternation whispered that this might offend Wilde's sensibilities. He overheard, however, and said: 'How too terrible of you! But we shall call it a nut-brown cigarette—and you shall smoke it.' In spite of the soothing effect of the dinner and copious draughts of Pommery, this all rather jarred on me, and I began to wish I had not come, until one of the guests, turning to Wilde, said:

'Oscar, do tell us a story.'

'And what, my dear boy, am I to tell you about?' said Oscar. They knew the answer. It came pat.

'The Early Church,' they cried.

Apparently it was Wilde's habit to invent, possibly on the spur

of the moment, stories of the early days of Christianity, none of which, so far as I have been able to discover, have been recorded. Shooting out his great cuffs, he began, and the following is but a very inadequate effort to reproduce his words.

'In the days when Christianity was making its first struggles in the great city of Rome, some of the idle rich began to be interested in this strange new creed, with its odd inhibitions and its reversal of all normal human impulses. Among those who saw the true beauty of the teaching was a young girl, a Patrician of a great House, by name Lydia. Daily she went to the mean quarters where this earnest little community dwelt and met—and daily she became more and more drawn to their beliefs, until at last she accepted the Baptism of Christ and joined their ranks. All this time, however, she had an admirer, also, of course, a Patrician, named Metellus, who loved her very dearly and very truly. She told him from day to day of her spiritual leanings and of her communion with the Christians, and every day Metellus did all he could to dissuade her from what seemed to him social and religious shipwreck. He begged her to leave her mad quest and to marry him—but she refused and said she could never marry him unless he too became a Christian. Goaded by his great love, Metellus consented to go with her to the Christians' meetings and to hear what they had to say. Truth to tell, he was but little moved by their discourses, and the whole thing seemed to him very foolish and unnecessary. But the flame of his love burnt fiercely, and seeing no other way of winning his Lydia, he affected complete conversion, and he too became a Christian. For a little while they were happy, very happy; but before long the attention of a ruthless Emperor was drawn to the activities of the Christians. False and cruel charges were brought against them and the persecution began. Many were seized and hurled into prison, and amongst them Lydia and Metellus, whose offence was the greater in that they were of Patrician rank. Then Lydia in the solitude of her cell began to regret what she had done.

"Perhaps, after all," she said to herself, "the whole story of Christ is false and His teaching an error. The old gods were easy and comfortable. Why, oh why! have I been so foolish?"

'And Metellus in *his* cell thought:

"Well, I was afraid that no good would come of this. I knew from the first that it was all wild talk with no practical purpose, that could not lead to anything but trouble."

'And the day came when they were each told that unless they would publicly renounce the Christian faith with contumely, they would be thrown to the wild beasts in the Great Circus before the Roman people. Terror and anguish filled their hearts—but Lydia said to herself:

"What have I done? I have brought myself and my dear, dear Metellus to this plight. If I now renounce Christ, he, who believes so fervently, will die despising me. That I could not bear."

'And Metellus said to himself:

"What a grievous business is this! I care not one straw for Christ or His doctrine and never did. But if I now renounce Him, Lydia, whose belief is as a rock, and who believes that I too believe as she does, will think me a common coward and will die despising me. That I could not bear."

'And so when the appointed day came, in their turn Lydia and Metellus were thrown to the wild beasts in the Circus—and thus they both died for a Faith in which they did not believe.'

There were almost nightly dinners of this kind given in Wilde's honour by members of this coterie, to many of which I was bidden. One was held on a Sunday in rooms in St. Giles on the first floor, which had a good-sized balcony overlooking the street. After dinner, it being a sultry night, several of us, including Wilde, sat out on the balcony. Crowds of townsmen were passing at the time, and one of them, recognising Wilde, shouted out: 'Why, there's Hoscarr—let's 'ave a speech, Hauthor, Hauthor, Hoscarr, Hoscarr.' Wilde was disconcerted and annoyed, and went in. I felt that honour was at stake—so calling to a kindred spirit among those present, I said: 'Quick! We must see to this. We must go out and read the Riot Act, then constitute ourselves into the Military and charge and disperse this unlawful assembly, using no more force than may be necessary.' He agreed, and we sallied forth and carried out our purpose. The crowd, being good-natured and rather afraid of possible reinforcements and doubtless, also, of some adjacent policemen, were scattered without difficulty or casualty. When we returned Oscar Wilde welcomed us with outspread arms—'Hail,' he cried. 'You are magnificent—you are giants—giants with souls.'

I said that as a reward for our efforts in the interests of Law and Order, Wilde should tell us another story of the Early Church. After the momentary reluctance that Art and self-respect demanded, he proceeded to tell us the narrative of the Death of Pope John the

Twenty-Second, in terms of which the following is, I am afraid, sorry rendering.

'A little while ago,' said Wilde, 'I was browsing in the library of a country house. I happened to pick out a musty, calf-bound volume of ancient European history and, opening it at random, my eye caught the sentence, "In that year died Pope John the Twenty-Second a shameful death." This intrigued me. What was the manner of this shameful death? I tried to find illumination then and there in that library, but without success. Returning to London, I consulted the British Museum and other authorities, but again without success. So I decided to discover the truth in the only way in which truth can with certainty be discovered—by evolving it from one's inner consciousness. The process was difficult and tardy, but of a sudden in the silence of the night the naked truth was delivered to me. It was this.

'The aged Pope, who had for long been little more than a living corpse, passed away. During his long-drawn sickness, intrigue had been busy and the College of Cardinals was torn by bitter faction. Every possible claimant had a party opposed to him with deadly hostility. There was not one regarding whom there was the shadow of agreement. After days of hot dispute, the College at length decided to compromise by appointing a complete nonentity who should be neutral. And to this end they bethought them of the young priest of a little church lying a few miles away in the Campagna. He was pleasant, good-looking and intelligent, but little over twenty years of age and entirely unconnected with any of the warring factions in Rome. Summoned to the Vatican, this young man was, with all the strange attendant ceremonies, duly appointed Pope under the name of John the Twenty-Second. In those days the Pope lived no secluded life within the walls of the Vatican, but mixed freely in the society of Rome, tasting of all its gaieties and pleasures. As the hot blood of youth ran in his veins, it was little wonder that before long Pope John, daily meeting the most beautiful women of the capital, should fall in love. The lady of his affections was the young wife of an elderly noble of a Great House. At first timid and reluctant, she gradually thawed to the addresses of the charming and youthful Pope: and a great love sprang up between them. First they loved with the love that dies—the love of the soul for the soul; and then they loved with the love that never dies—the love of the body for the body. But in Rome itself, their opportunities were few. Curious eyes were for



ever watching, and the tongue of scandal was ever on the alert. They resolved, therefore, to meet in some secluded spot afar from the city. The lady's husband owned a little villa with a beautiful orchard some miles out in the Campagna. What meeting-place could be more perfect? The lady gave Pope John the key of a little postern gate that opened on to the orchard, and they agreed on the day and hour when they should meet there. Early on the day appointed Pope John arrayed himself in the gay fête-day dress of a Roman noble—and mounting his horse rode forth with exulting heart into the Campagna. When he had gone a few miles, he suddenly saw in the distance the little church of which he had been such a little while ago the humble, unknown priest. Drawn by an irresistible feeling he decided to branch off his route and visit his former charge. It was still early and he had time and to spare. He approached the little church and tethered his horse; and then a strange fancy took him, to don the priest's vestments and to sit in the confessional as he had so often done before. The church was open and empty, so putting on the vestments, he sat down behind the *grille* and began to think of the strange ways of Fate, of his meteoric elevation and of the joy that was before him. Of a sudden the door opened and a man hurried in, with face half-masked, evidently in much perturbation of mind. The man came up to the confessional and grasped the rail with hands that betrayed the agony of his spirit.

"Father," he said in a broken voice, "I have a question to ask of you."

"Speak, my son," said Pope John. "What is it that you would know?"

"Is there," said the man, "any sin so great that Christ Himself could not absolve me from it?"

"Nay, my son, there is no such sin. But what grievous sin have you committed that you ask me this?"

"I have committed no sin," said the man, "but I am about to commit a sin so deadly that I do not think that even Christ Himself could absolve me. I am about to kill the Vicar of Christ upon Earth, Pope John the Twenty-Second."

"Even from this sin could Christ absolve you," said Pope John.

The man rose and hurried from the church, and Pope John took off the priest's vestments, mounted his horse and rode out into the Campagna and on towards the orchard where his love awaited him. At length he came to the little postern gate of the orchard.

This he opened with the key which she had given him and entered. There on the sunlit green turf in a clearing between the trees stood his lady awaiting him with the love-light in her eyes. With a little cry she ran towards him and threw herself into his arms. As they stood in that first long embrace, suddenly a figure sprang from the twilight of the trees and drove a dagger hilt-high into the back of Pope John. With a groan he fell to the ground—a dying man. Then with a supreme effort he raised his hand, and, looking at his assailant, said in the last words of the Absolution :

‘“*Quoad ego possum et tu eges, absolvo te.*”<sup>1</sup>

‘And so died Pope John the Twenty-Second a shameful death.’

<sup>1</sup> ‘As far as I can and thou needest it, I absolve thee.’

## ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND.

God's Pity! All things weary me :—my wenches—  
 Until I drove them out! Gone! Still they prattled,  
 Of silks from France, gewgaws from Italy,  
 Worn by the prideful dames of Paris, Rome—  
 —Our folly travels far since I won peace—  
 And, if they thought I dozed, of men and love!  
 Men—raiment—once my chosen toys; but Love—  
 The lie that lives and dies on man's hot lips  
 Is a parlous toy for queens! My child-eyes saw  
 Queens bloom like weeds, to be as soon cut down—  
 Queens lost for love—Queens slip like common sluts!  
 But queens fall far and die. I live—I reign,  
 Loveless, but still Elizabeth the Queen  
 Of England, and the hearts of loyal men!

They shall not hound *me* out: my bigots at home,  
 Nor all Rome's murderous martyrs! Martyrs—they!  
 They die as traitors and for bloody plots,  
 Or might have served their mass for me! I'm not  
 A bigot-saint like Mary! Little Jane  
 Had kept her head with me: her lesser sisters  
 Kept their soft heads safer than their soft hearts  
 Although their folly vexed me. *They* threatened not  
 England's peace and my life like her, the bale  
 Of Scotland and sure stirrer-up of strife!  
 Ruthless blue eyes, pierce not into my dreams!  
 I would have saved you, fought my counsellors,  
 Held high the sacredness of royal heads!  
 Mary must die, they said, or else Elizabeth!

Ay, she was fair! But I was fair enough,  
 Bright Boleyn's daughter, with my grim sire's brain,  
 And wise where Stuart was weak. Will her fool son,  
 Who loved her not in life, bring her to sleep  
 Near me in death? Rivals? Nay, Death forgives!  
 Almost I think hate but perverted love.

Life waned when Mary went ! So many have gone  
From a court once bright : and I, I have grown old,  
Pomp and State irk me ! I was never strong,  
Yet hunted, danced, made love for policy,  
Went gorgeously—a Queen should dazzle all eyes,  
Forget her woman's weakness, wield the sword  
Of justice, wear her crown to awe the mob—  
So I, Elizabeth, hold my majesty !

By my own wits ; sharpened—ah, all too soon !  
As babe I learnt to guard my life, my rank,  
From my sire's fickle moods, his women, and all  
The plots of scheming courtiers, whose rise  
Or fall hung on this threatened life. No help  
From sickly brother, or the grudging gifts  
Of Mary, who still scorned the Boleyn's child  
And hated Harry's daughter. Oh, I learned  
Life's lessons young, who had no youth, but played  
Youth's arts to win me service, placate foes  
To think me harmless ! Ah, the plots, the snares  
Set round my girlish feet ! But I held steady  
My head, and steel'd my heart and kept my spirit  
Even in the Tower : to stand there England's Queen !

They would have had me wed ; friends, fools and blind,  
Bidding me choose a consort who had held  
My bed a mounting-block to vault my Throne.  
So I played chess with suitors, played the Queen,  
And still I won. A risky game, yet saved  
My Queen and my poor pawns, for I am England's  
And England's mine ! Together we have risen,  
Together had fallen, trampled 'neath the hoofs  
Of Rome and Spain or France had I played my game  
With less of skill and cunning. Saint I am none,  
Yet the High Powers have led me. I am Queen  
Still, and my England free. Elizabeth  
Shall have no name forgotten down the years,  
But yet shall be remembered through all time.

A merry game too, playing my suitors so,  
Each court still hindering sly its rival's power,  
Till I grew strong—secure upon my Throne.

So played I with the Churches. Scarce know I,  
 What I believe : yet this God knows and I,  
 That Rome and Spain are still my foes and His :  
 By their fruits judge ye them,—destruction dogs  
 Their ways in the Indies and the Netherlands :  
 I do God's work, perchance for my own sake,  
 Ruthless. Yea, the Popes for God's high priests  
 Rule their house ill ! Old Creeds and New I weighed :  
 Silenced my woman's heart that loathed the cold  
 Stern Protestants that broke my sister's strength !  
 I will rule Church and State—Elizabeth—Queen.

The Thames runs swiftly darkling to the deep  
 Even as my thoughts to-night—my life—my reign.  
 I have no son : must *her* son ape my state ?  
 Wield my strong sceptre like a jester's wand ?  
 Pull down the Power the Tudors have built up ?  
 No Knave must sit in Royal Harry's Throne,  
 James has the blood of kings in his dull veins,  
 But had I been my father's son or mothered  
 A stronger ! My strong sire bred barren stock,  
 Edward—Spain's slave, my sister. At the least  
 Unwed I've been no mark for Europe's jeers  
 At a childless wife. I kept my mateless pride  
 That roused desires in men and kept them bound  
 To Elizabeth of England, Virgin Queen.

Dusk falls—or fails my sight ? I am old—old—old !  
 Sly James counts my few years : my servants too  
 Weary for change. My court grows grim and dull ;  
 The Golden Lads come eager : stare amazed  
 At the painted hag their fathers— All, all dead  
 Who loved Elizabeth ! Walsingham—Cecil—Hatton,  
 And Leicester whom I might have loved had he  
 Been stronger or I weaker ! Essex too,  
 The rash boy, I believed my age's prop—  
 Gone ! When my Progress flamed last up the Strand  
 The cheers were fainter : England tires of me.  
 All who once cheer'd are dead, or by warm hearths,  
 Where I was fain to be, who rode in state,  
 Conquering my woes and weakness, England's Queen.

For I am worn out with the toils of State.  
Oh I could fling me down on 'Sorrow's Throne'  
—My Player knew a queen's or beggar's heart—  
And let life slip into death's waters deep,  
But there's still work to do. The French spy writes :  
'The Queen's strength fails.' Lights ! lights ! My richest gown,  
Music ! I give the Ambassador audience.  
But mark !—I must be found as unaware  
Dancing a lively measure. God He knows  
My mind : not vanity all. I will not drop  
My sword and sceptre yet : held strongly all  
My glorious reign. And still I hold my place  
In every honest heart, their Queen till death,  
England's Elizabeth.

CLARA TURNBULL.

### THE 'CORNHILL MIDSHIPMAN.'

THE Battles of the Falkland Islands and Jutland were described in THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE by an anonymous young writer who was known to the world in consequence as the 'Cornhill Midshipman.' All who write on the picturesque or graphic side of the War at Sea, all those who desire to show what the fighting looked like to those who participated in it, will find these descriptions valuable for the subjects with which they deal, and Sir Henry Newbolt, one of the first of such writers, has made long citations from the 'Cornhill Midshipman.'

The description of the Falklands fight in THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for April, 1915, was just a boy's letter to his parents at home; but it gave a very full account of all that passed from the first moment when the alarm was given, to the rescue of the poor Germans from the *Gneisenau* to whose aid the writer of the letter had gone himself in one of the cutters of the *Carnarvon*. His boat saved one officer and sixteen men.

When the Midshipman returned from Jutland the then Editor of the CORNHILL requested him to write an account of that battle as well. He was in an excellent position to do so, for his place had been in the foretop of the *Barham* which was engaged throughout the action, and his job had been to observe and report upon the effect of our own shots and those of the enemy. Not fifty officers in the whole battle can have seen as much of it as he. The account was written from Notes taken during the action, and it was seen by the Prime Minister and other high authorities—but THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for which it was written was not allowed by the Censor to publish it at the time. It appeared, however, in June, 1926, ten years afterwards, and was then described by *The Times* as one of the best historic documents of the Battle.

Lieutenant-Commander Arthur Cary Jelf, son of Master Jelf and grandson of the Judge—who was formerly the 'Cornhill Midshipman'—has died this summer in Sarawak at the age of thirty-three. His short life was full of high adventure. It had been his ambition from childhood 'to have adventures.' Before he went to Osborne he had already known from experience what it was like to be in



a small boat of 500 tons in a full gale in the North Sea and to be lost in a fog in the dangerous waters off Ushant in a vessel which had lost her pilot. At Dartmouth he was long remembered for a swimming adventure of an unusual character. A crew of cadets was on duty on the water. One of them said to young Jelf: 'I bet you ten shillings that you won't swim ashore.' Seeing him hesitate the others encouraged him by ever-rising stakes. When they rose to ten pounds, he took off his coat and plunged overboard. A very dangerous tide was running, and the officers called to him to come back. Buoys were thrown to him, but he waved them all aside and swam ashore. For this offence he was brought before the Captain—stern at first, he relented when he had heard the whole story and dismissed him with a 'Carry on.' Young Jelf loved to tell the story of his last days at Dartmouth when the Captain called the cadets together and read them the official telegram announcing that war was imminent, telling them that should it be declared he had promised to mobilise the College in eight hours. The cadets were then dismissed to their work and play and had to stick to the routine until the bugle rang out the fateful news, when they threw down their bats and pads where they were and hurried each to the appointed place where his ship lay.

Arthur Jelf was appointed to the *Carnarvon*, but she had sailed before he could join her; so he was taken aboard the unhappy *Monmouth*. Had he not fortunately overtaken his own ship at the Cape Verde Islands he must have been lost in the *Monmouth* at Coronel.

The *Carnarvon* flew the flag of Admiral Stoddart who commanded the Second Battle-Cruiser Squadron, and as flagship she was constantly up and down the Atlantic engaged in the capture of prizes and many other adventures until, just before the battle of the Falklands, the *Inflexible* and the *Invincible* arrived under Admiral Sturdee, with results that are well known.

After the battle the *Carnarvon* was employed for a long time in searching for the *Dresden*, which had escaped. Many nights were spent in navigating the Straits of Magellan *in the dark*, and they hoped to meet the *Dresden* at any moment as they turned the corner of one of the many islands which the Straits contain. It was not their fortune to find her, but they had many other adventures—the most formidable of which was to be shipwrecked on the Abrolhos Rocks. The ship which had an enormous hole

in her keel was saved by the most masterly seamanship, and the work of stopping the leak with vast sea-mats and all that followed in the next long anxious weeks (during which the vessel's whereabouts were, of course, a profound war-secret) were of the most fascinating interest to the Midshipman. At Montreal some enemy contrived to poison the ship's water, and there was terrible illness on board, which had, however, no fatal consequence.

Arthur Jelf returned to England in the *Megantic*, and after undergoing a torpedo course, was sent to the *Barham*. Many, many were the false alarms before the Battle of Jutland that 'Der Tag' had come and that they were about to meet the enemy in a decisive action. But mines and submarines, of course, were all about them and the Midshipman in his Watch had to glue his eyes to the water around him in search of periscopes for long hours at a time. On one occasion the Ward Room and the Gun Room were opposing one another in a hockey-match, when it became necessary to alter course suddenly to avoid a torpedo. The Ward Room Officers ran to the ship's side to watch where the torpedo went. But the Gun Room team—such at least was the Midshipman's story—played the ball into goal and reminded their opponents how Drake had said, 'Finish the game first!'

Arthur Jelf's next appointment was to the *P.34* and this, in his opinion, was the most dangerous part of his career. He was 'Number One'—so that when his commanding officer took his turn below he had the whole responsibility of steering the vessel amidst all the dangers that surrounded her and which may easily be left to the imagination. He was, at this time, just nineteen years of age. Once he was instrumental in saving nine lives by his quick judgment while in this vessel. Nine men were sheltering from a very heavy sea in a deck cabin. 'Come out of it,' he called, and within a few minutes the whole structure was swept overboard.

One day an order called for Naval Officers willing to undertake service in the 'lighter-than-air ships.' Arthur Jelf volunteered for this work, and during the rest of the War he was employed in what was at first the R.N.A.S. and afterwards the R.A.F. His most important work in this respect was in the 'C9'—a small airship which operated off the Cornish coast. He believed that she probably destroyed three enemy submarines and certainly one—but this claim was notoriously difficult to establish with certainty. The U-Boats never attacked 'C9,' being of course after larger quarry—and the danger was that of the difficulty of navigation

which has cost so many lives both then and afterwards. Very few of his brother officers of those days are still alive. He was more than a thousand hours in the air. There was one day when he started with the dawn and flew for about half an hour to leeward and it took him about twenty hours to return, making a fearful fight against the wind all the way and having practically no petrol left when he made the landing-stage. Frequently in fogs he had hairbreadth escapes from crashing against cliffs or lighthouses or wireless poles—he dared not be too far from those landmarks for fear of missing his way in the thick darkness.

One evening on returning from an all-day expedition in the air, he heard that there was a fire in Mullion with which those on the spot were unable to cope. The building in flames contained a store of ammunition. He instantly collected a working party of his own men and hurried to the spot. With a hatchet in hand he himself directed operations and took the responsibility of destroying whatever he thought it necessary to destroy in order to save the rest. This took him until daybreak of the next morning—but the task was successfully accomplished. He saw air-service also in other parts of the country, and took occasion to visit Dartmouth and Mowden School, Brighton, his beloved 'prep' school, and to fly over Blakeney Harbour, and to speak through a megaphone to his mother, who was sailing there in her little boat the 'Owl.'

Another evening he had an experience of a very different kind—one which he always confessed filled him with utter terror. It is a strange story, but this is how he told it. After flying all day he was tired and hungry and he was walking along the road from Cury to Mullion, where he was going to dine with friends. It was dark. He looked over a gate into a field and saw a man dressed in Elizabethan costume, a hat with a long swaying feather, and a green cloak, holding a naked sword in his hand. An icy feeling ran through him as he watched. Then another man, whose dress he did not see quite so distinctly, came from behind the hedge. They fought and one of the combatants fell. Then the man whom he had first seen beckoned and six men carrying a coffin appeared. The man now pointed at him—Arthur Jelf—who then fell fainting on the road. His friends who saw him that evening said that he was in a state of complete collapse. It may of course be suggested that the collapse was the cause and not the effect of the ghostly phenomena—but he afterwards learnt that others had told similar

stories of what had been seen in the same place, to which legends of Elizabethan times attach.

At the time of the Armistice he was still flying—he had not yet ceased to be an Infant, *prima facie* incapable by law of making a contract on his own account.

He returned to the Royal Navy proper; but his eyes having become as the result of his work in the air unfit to pass the tests required for naval purposes,—he retired as Lieutenant and was subsequently promoted Lieutenant-Commander on the retired list.

Now followed a period of rest at home—not entirely without adventure, for during the Coal Strike he drove an engine. When he was a small child he had, like others, the ambition to drive a train through Pinner, where he lived, and this he actually did for a fortnight.

A committee of business men now sat in London to find employment for ex-officers. They asked him where he was prepared to go. He would go wherever they liked. 'When will you be ready to start?' asked the Chairman. 'As soon as you please, sir,' he said; and in a week or two he was off for three years to Venezuela.

His work was to cut a road through unexplored jungle to bring up machinery to an oil-field. He spent much of his time in the saddle—a form of exercise to which, as is the case with many naval men, he was hitherto entirely unaccustomed. Much of the work he did was such as is usually entrusted to skilled engineers; but he did everything required of him by the light of common sense, as that common sense is developed by the wonderful education of Osborne and Dartmouth and a man-of-war—and here it should perhaps be also mentioned that he had also been a 'scout' as a boy, and doubtless owed something to the early training of Baden Powell's splendid scheme.

He was often for months alone with natives, rarely seeing a white man. They felled trees and built bridges, which often had to be rebuilt several times as the result of floods. He had to make long swims in rivers and often to swim his mule across as well. He slept in all sorts and kinds of places. He woke one night to find the shining eyes of a jaguar about eight yards away, but he frightened it off by his shouts, or to use his own expression by saying 'Boo' to it. He shot a great python and he met a rattlesnake, but decided to let the sleeping snake lie. He was at close quarters with pumas and wild boars and other wild beasts, and had, on occasions, to pass a night in a tree before it was safe to come

down because of them. There was much marshy country full of alligators to negotiate. But all of these he counted as nothing in comparison with the horrible insects, mosquitoes, ticks and jiggers—whose habits will not bear description—and which caused him real suffering, sufficiently serious to necessitate his having to be carried by his men in a litter sometimes for several days at a time.

He went from time to time into comparative civilisation at places like Caracas and Puerto Cabello. But the condition of public affairs was most unsettled, and he was horrified at the sight of some of the political prisoners he saw—old men with long white beards who had spent many years in prison under intolerable circumstances, and who gazed with astonishment at their first sight of motor-cars. He heard that there was an awful castle like the Bastille for such prisoners, with underground dungeons to which the sun and light never penetrated. The lower ones were below the sea and at high tide the sea came in up to a foot or eighteen inches. The prisoners were fed on black bread and beans, there were lots of rats, and there was a torture chamber. But on one occasion Arthur Jelf was able to do something for their relief. He made friends with the Governor of the gaol and gave him a very good dinner with a great deal of alcoholic refreshment. When he became pleasantly sentimental he told him that he was a good fellow and that it would be a delightful thing to release all the prisoners in that gaol. He actually did so. But he came to Arthur Jelf next morning in tears and said: 'What have you made me do?'

After his return from Venezuela, he married a daughter of Major Sampson-Way, R.M.L.I., who had been in command of the wireless station at Mullion during the War, and began to talk of his own fireside and of a domestic life.

Soon afterwards, however, he decided to go to Miri in Sarawak in the service of another oil company, and he was obliged to leave his wife behind in the first instance while he was preparing a home for her. Amongst other work for his new employers, he was engaged in the laying of submarine pipes in the harbour and was often out in heavy weather. When he did get a few days' leave, he chose to spend it in a solitary exploration of virgin forest in the manner of his Venezuelan days, accompanied by Dyak guides. He had several rivers to cross in rickety canoes which wanted very careful management, and there were enormous crocodiles to be seen.

He took occasion to visit the houses of Dyak head-hunters, whose doors were ornamented with the skulls of defeated enemies—it being counted a shame among them if a man had not a few such heads to show.

After his wife arrived he secured an office appointment as Labour Superintendent, controlling several thousands of men. But he was not always in the office even now, for finding that he had lost many men from malaria he organised working parties to travel about the country to destroy the mosquitoes and, of course, he went with them as often as he could.

During his last years he had more office work to do than he had had before and he was able to give much of his spare time to playing tennis and golf and bridge in his wife's company, and to trying to teach his son, who is not yet three years old, to swim. And he was churchwarden of the little church.

E. A. J.

## THE DEVIL'S FINGER.

BY A. A. IRVINE.

ON a bluff overlooking the sacred river Sattyamurti the Saint, absorbed in meditation, sat with unseeing eyes.

Upon his head, close-tonsured save for a single lock, upon his emaciated body, clad in a single saffron garment, the sun's rays beat pitilessly. In front of him a drowsy crocodile basked on a mud-bank. Behind him, in the mango-groves, troops of grey monkeys chattered and played. Downstream, the smoke of funeral-pyres curled upwards from the burning *ghâts*. Upstream, on the long flights of steps leading from the conical-roofed temples to the river-margin, gay crowds were jostling in the turmoil of a bathing festival.

Sattyamurti paid no heed to these things. There were weightier matters to ponder. Doubtless, heat and cold, life and death, joy and sorrow and love were nothing better than *Maya*—Illusion! But what if the Gods themselves, what if the 'Man of Sin,' the Devil, were, likewise, Illusion? What if the Universe and all that appertained to it were naught but the substance of a dream?

The shadows lengthened. With a sigh, the Saint awakened from his trance: some day the riddle would be solved. Gathering his staff and sandals, he made his leisurely way towards the city gates.

Musing, he threaded a path along the narrow lanes, past strings of padding camels, past the wooden stalls of vendors of *sharbat* and cheap glass bangles, through the groups of bathers returning from the river with bowls of sacred water. From many of the houses issued the sound of music, the grateful odour of evening meals in preparation. Around him was an atmosphere of peace, were people with happy faces. And yet, he sadly reflected, it needed but a chance word from one of them to lead to a blow, a blow to lead to a quarrel, a quarrel to a riot—each separate act a link in a chain of disaster!

At a street corner, close to the shop of Abdulla the confectioner, he paused for a while in the shade of a *pipal*-tree. On the opposite side of the lane towered the walls of the palace gardens. From



the open shop-front came the buzz of flies hovering over piles of sugared cakes and pots of honey. Abdulla, his palm-leaf fan fallen from his hand, snored on his strip of matting.

And, while Sattayamurti lingered, it seemed to him that, of a sudden, the sun had been blotted out. Down the centre of the lane came twirling a murky column of dust, driving before it a blast of wind scorching as a hell-furnace of *Naraka*. And Sattayamurti knew that it heralded the approach of 'The Man of Sin.'

He felt no fear. Twice before had he encountered the Fiend, had plied him with questions. Twice had the Fiend listened, smiling his malignant smile, but returning no answer. Nevertheless, to Brahmins 'three' is the perfect number : he would question him again.

The dust-cloud thinned, and there appeared, leaning against the wall of Abdulla's shop, one elbow resting on the roof of it, the gigantic figure of him whom Hindus call 'The Executioner of Mankind.' Except for his belly, which was scarlet, his body was black as jet. His hair and beard were long and white. From high above the lintel his distorted visage glared down upon the Saint with wild, bright eyes.

Sattayamurti spoke boldly. 'Oh, Man of Sin, why dost thou range this world seeking to bring misfortune upon men ?'

And the Devil answered, with a crooked smile :

'I do not !'

The Saint's serene face hardened.

'Verily, thou art the Father of Lies !' he retorted indignantly. 'For, whithersoever thou goest, there follow calamities, one leading on to another like the links of a chain. Why dost thou do this evil ?'

The Devil answered him again :

'Sattayamurti, thou art mistaken ! For *I* do nothing !'

With that he broke into mocking laughter, and, stooping, dipped one huge black finger in a jar round which the flies were buzzing. With his finger he daubed upon the lintel of the doorway a glistening smear of honey. And so, was gone.

And while the Saint still tarried, pondering the answer, a fly poised for an instant above the shining smear of honey, settled to feast on it. Like a streak of emerald flashing through the sunlight, a lizard darted downwards from the eaves and gulped the fly.

Sattayamurti shook his head sorrowfully. 'The Devil's Finger !'

he muttered. 'Already three links in the Chain of Destruction : the honey, the fly, and the lizard ! What shall the last link be ?'

In her pavilion, high upon the walls, the Princess reclined amongst her pile of silken cushions.

Through the latticed window drifted the hum of the busy streets. From the palace pleasure-grounds a soft breeze wafted the perfume of roses and orange-blossom. From her cool alcove in the pillared hall, where alabaster columns, reflected in the dark-green marble pavements, seemed to her fancy a flock of giant swans dipping their necks in water, she could watch gay butterflies flitting from flower to flower in the scented gardens.

In attendance on her were her hand-maidens, Ahalya and Hasamurti, along with Bauna the Dwarf, one of the few men whom she was permitted to see.

Of the two girls Hasamurti was her favourite ; lovely, feather-brained, well-named Laughter Incarnate. Ahalya was a conceited beauty, skilled in the playing of the lute. As for Bauna the Dwarf, with the strength and valour of a lion in his squat body, who sat by the window teaching a new trick to Chor Khan, the monkey, the Princess knew that he would give his life for her.

In truth, she was worthy of a man's adoration. Her face was a pure oval ; her mouth the colour of pomegranate. Her eyes were lazy mirrors. Beneath her silken bodice a shell-pink lotus nestled between her breasts. From the waist downwards she was robed in silver tissue ; there were rings and jewels everywhere, pendent from delicate nostrils, on slender throat and arms, on the small feet rosy with henna.

But though she was fashioned for Love, and dreamed of it, Love would never be hers. She knew that clearly. Parents she had none ; and Rajah Nal Singh, her uncle, Chief of Kamber State, bent on alliance with the neighbouring State of Aundi, had framed her destiny. Though a princess, she was but a pawn in the game between two kings. Before the year had died she would be consort to one old enough to be her father, sated with life, wearied of other women. With a sigh, she turned her head and gazed downwards through the lattice at the freedom of the open streets.

Under a *pipal*-tree, close to Abdulla's shop, she saw a tall, gaunt figure clothed in the garb of an ascetic. His countenance

was upturned; and his lips were moving, as though in converse with himself.

Bauna, watching idly through the window with the two girls, recognised him.

'He is Sattiyamurti the Saint,' he said. 'A holy man, indeed! Even the Rajah Sahib listens when he speaks.'

'All holy men are mad!' Hasamurti giggled. 'See!—he talks with someone, though there is none present!'

'Such men can weave powerful spells!' Ahalya shuddered, fingering the charm at her neck.

'Perchance he communes with the Gods,' the Princess hazarded gravely. 'I would that I might listen a while to such an one as he!'

Hasamurti commented pertly: 'Twould be but time wasted! Doubtless, he looks on women as a peacock looks on snakes!'

'All that I desire to hear from a man,' Ahalya simpered, 'is that I am beautiful!'

Bauna, who trusted her but little, eyed her askance.

'That can I believe!' he snapped. 'The saint would have naught in common with thee. But it is said that, as a swan can separate milk from water, so can Sattiyamurti distinguish truth from falsehood. Wherefore, be careful!'

Ahalya's angry reply was cut short by the excited gibbering of Chor Khan, the monkey. His small grey head thrust through the lattice-work, he was staring at the lintel over the confectioner's doorway. He scrambled through and swung down, clinging to the tufts of grass in the wall-crevices.

Hasamurti clapped her hands gleefully.

'He goes to raid old fat Abdulla's store!' she cried. 'Rightly is he named Chor Khan, Prince of Thieves!'

'Nay, 'tis the lizard that he chases!' Bauna corrected her. 'Now, watch!'

Chor Khan crept stealthily across the street, sprang suddenly upwards. A second later, the dead body of the lizard fell into the roadway. There was a smear of honey on the lintel. Chor Khan found it to his liking, descended to where the jars on the wooden trestles promised ampler provision.

And whilst he gorged himself at leisure, those in the pavilion heard the distant murmur of a mob swarming through the *bazārs*. Bauna enlightened the women.

'Tis a crowd of sightseers,' he explained, 'gaping at Shaitān,

the Rajah's fighting blood-horse. His grooms lead him back to the stables.'

They could see Shaitān presently, a huge bay ramping beast, ears cocked, eyeballs aglare, tearing at the cruel thorn-bit in his jaws. To either cheek-piece of the bit had been welded rings of steel, through which ran ropes gripped by strong men. On the horse's foam-flecked coat were deep-cut talon-scars; for, once on a feast-day, Shaitān had fought before the Rajah in the walled arena with Ali Sher, the tiger, and had trampled him to death. More than one man had died beneath those battering hooves.

The noise awoke Abdulla. He sat up, spied the monkey robbing him and, with a bellow of wrath, went blundering forward. A great brass tray of sweetmeats clattered into the street, and Chor Khan, scuttling to safety, sprang from the trestles under the forefeet of the mutinous horse. Shaitān, snorting with rage and terror, reared straight up, wrenching the ropes from the grasp of those who held them.

There followed pandemonium. Sensing his freedom, the mighty brute wheeled and plunged murderously at the struggling throng behind him. A cry went up: 'The Man-Slayer! The Man-Slayer is loose!' One hapless wretch, seized by the shoulder in a vicious grip, was hurled with a sickening thud against a pillar. The *bazār* emptied like magic.

But it was not quite empty! In the centre of it, forgotten in the general stampede, there stood bawling for his mother a tiny brown-skinned urchin. From behind the lattice the Princess, breathless with horror, saw the maddened beast glimpse his fresh quarry, bear down upon it open-mouthed. An instant later the small screaming bundle was snatched aloft held by a strip of clothing!

And then, before worse could happen, there leaped from an alley-way a man armed with an iron-shod cudgel. Dauntless, he tore the child from the reeking jaws, sprang sideways, dropped it behind him; turned swiftly, swung up the cudgel two-handed and brought it crashing down between the great brute's eyes. Stunned by the blow, Shaitān staggered bewildered; and, with a yell of triumph, his panic-stricken grooms dashed from their shelter and flung themselves upon the trailing guide-ropes. But as the thorn-bit racked his mouth afresh, his savage heels lashed out. Struck on the side, his vanquisher rolled over and lay still.

The Princess, heedless of her sobbing maidens, stood by the

window wide-eyed. She could see him lying there, a young, strong man, his pallid face turned skywards. And then, in fancy, she saw him again, brave as the War God, fair as the God of Love, who carries a bow of flowers, with a row of bees for his bow-string.

Bauna the Dwarf spoke first.

'By the favour of Rama, I have this day seen a Man!' he burst out exultantly. 'And look!—he moves! Enquiry shall be made as to his name, that he may receive the reward that is fitting.'

The Princess ordered: 'Go! Bring him within the walls, that his hurts be tended!'

Bauna hesitated. 'It is scarce proper——!' he dared to remonstrate. 'His garb is that of a common fellow. Elsewhere there might be found for him a lodging——'

The Princess stamped an imperious foot. 'Am I a beggar, that a servant questions my bidding? Go, I say!' She glanced warningly at her maidens. 'And let those who value my service refrain from babbling!'

So they brought Jai Singh, returned to his own country with a caravan from the North, within the walls of the palace.

Hasamurti was the first to guess her mistress's secret. She could read the tokens: the listlessness, the sighings, the questions as to the young man's welfare. The affair had her warmest sympathy!

He was recovered from his hurts, she said. If her mistress wished to hear this from his own lips, there was her room and she could arrange a meeting. Ahalya should know nothing. Bauna would grumble, but be silent. What were her dear mistress's orders?

Like dawn, the colour flushed over the Princess's throat and bosom. 'Hasamurti!—that it be soon!' she whispered.

So, when the palace was asleep, Jai Singh for the first time stood in the Princess's presence. She seemed to him Lakshmi, born from the foam of the ocean, wonderful as moonlight streaming into a forest glade. For a space he remained speechless, worshipping her beauty.

But though she knew that she loved him, she remembered that she was the Princess, and a frown spread over her countenance like a dark ripple over the surface of a pool.

'What manner of man art thou,' she haughtily demanded, 'to stare so rudely? To stand before royalty without obeisance?'

Jai Singh regained his courage and laughed softly.

'Lady,' he answered, 'must I be blamed if I marvel tonguetied at the splendour of the lotus? As for who I am, Jai Singh is my name, of thine own race, a Rajput. As for the obeisance, it may be that I, likewise, am entitled to it—for verily, I think that I, too, am a prince!'

It was her turn to regard him, wonder-struck.

'Thou?—a prince? Did a soothsayer tell thee this?'

Jai Singh laughed again. 'Nay, I have weightier proof than that! A horoscope and a seal worn round my neck since childhood.'

'Where wast thou born, then?'

'As I believe, Lady, within this very palace! So the woman taught me who tended me from infancy. She was my nurse and, when disaster threatened, she fled to the North, taking me with her. Now that I am grown, I have returned to seek my fortune.'

From a pouch slung round his neck he drew a paper and a seal, and laid them before her. She was all eagerness! Her heart beat high; for though a princess has been known to love a common man, it is more seemly that she should have a prince for her lover!

'Let us take counsel with Bauna the Dwarf,' she advised. 'He is wise, and has great knowledge of such matters.'

Bauna came sour-faced; but when he had scanned the horoscope and seal, had heard the young man's story, he took from his head his turban and placed it at Jai Singh's feet.

'Maharāj!' he cried. 'Have I permission to speak? A certain matter is now plain to me! Rajah Nal Singh, who now rules over Kamber, had two elder brothers; Zalim Singh and Ram Singh. When those two brothers died, both in the selfsame year, there were many who spake of poison! Rajah Zalim had an infant son: it was given out that the child had died also. Rajah Ram had a daughter—'

The dwarf paused, and his gaze rested meaningly upon the Princess listening with parted lips.

'But the seal?' Jai Singh questioned him impatiently.

'Maharāj! There is no mistaking it! It is the seal of Rajah Zalim Singh—thy father!'

Jai Singh laughed bitterly. 'It would seem, then, that I am a prince! A beggar prince—without a principality!'

Bauna sought to hearten him. 'Thy name is of good omen—Jai Singh, Lion of Victory! There may yet come opportunity—'

Jai Singh interrupted ruefully : ' A formidable lion, indeed, with his claws cut ! '

The dwarf wagged his big head solemnly. ' They will grow again ! ' he asserted. ' Listen, Maharāj ! The people of Kamber State wax daily more weary of Rajah Nal Singh's cruelties and taxes. 'Twere easy to rouse them ! Moreover, there might come help from Aundi ! ' he hinted.

The Princess exclaimed in amazement : ' Bauna, thou art mad ! Help from the Chief of Aundi ? From the State with which my uncle seeks alliance at the price of my maidenhood ? '

The dwarf chuckled. ' It was not of the Chief that I thought, but of Dhola Rai, the leader of his army. It is rumoured that Dhola Rai covets the throne of Aundi ; and whither he goes his troops will follow him. It may well be that he will aid us, in the hope that some day we may render him assistance. If it be permitted, I will enquire further into the matter. '

After Bauna had withdrawn, Jai Singh turned once more to the Princess. His breath came quickly, for he saw her soft lips break in a smile. His youth was hot within him, and he fell on his knees before her.

' Behold, I make obeisance, oh my Princess ! ' he said.

Shyly she looked at him through silken lashes, smiled again as his arms went round her.

' How long have I known thee, ' she whispered, ' oh thou bold lover ? '

He answered : ' For a thousand years—or for an instant. I have lost count of time ! '

The days passed and, while Bauna was busied with his plans, the lovers met often in Hasamurti's chamber.

But, one night, there came a hammering at the outer door. Hasamurti, bursting in, flung herself distraught at her mistress's feet.

' We are lost ! ' she cried. ' Ahalya has learnt our secret and betrayed us ! There are soldiers waiting without to take the Prince away ! '

Grim-faced, there entered men of the Rajah's guard. A great seal was set on the door. Jai Singh they dragged to the common prison, the Princess's farewell ringing in his ears : ' Beloved ! Death is strong : but Love is stronger ! '

Under cover of the darkness, Bauna the Dwarf slipped past



the sentries at the city gates and hastened to the lonely cave in the hills, where Sattyamurti the Saint had his meagre dwelling.

When next the lovers met, it was in the audience-chamber. At one end of it was a gem-encrusted throne raised upon massive feet of solid gold. From upper casements the shafts of sunlight played on the jewelled peacocks flaunting on either arm, rubies and sapphires agleam in their spreading tails.

Upon the throne, beneath a pearl-fringed canopy, was seated Nal Singh, the Rajah, his gross body bulging from his vesture of cloth of gold. Beneath his turban, clasped with a diamond brooch, his heavy-lidded eyes glowered sullenly at the scene before him.

Ranged in a semicircle below the throne sat the nobles of the Court. From behind the marble columns dancing-girls and servitors, huddled together, peered in eager anticipation.

There were those who pitied the Princess, as she stood there, pale but scornful, her countenance shamefully unveiled before the gaze of men. But none dared voice his pity!

For Jai Singh, tall and unflinching beside her, there was naught of compassion. He was an upstart, a wastrel who had presumed to sully the honour of the State. Let the torturers deal with him!

The Rajah rested his velvet-scabbarded scimitar across his knees and spake sharply:

'Their guilt is known to all. It remains but to decide the manner of their punishment.'

Jai Singh cried boldly:

'O King!—grant me this one favour! Visit thy wrath only upon me! For myself I look not for either justice or mercy at the hands of him who slew Zalim Singh, my father!'

A murmur of amazement ran through the assembly. Rajah Zalim's rule had been popular: there were many who hated his successor. The eyes of all were fastened on the young man, dressed like a servant, hurling defiance at a monarch on his throne.

Beside himself with rage and consternation, the tyrant leaned forward, struggling to speak. His grasp tightened on his scimitar, and his voice thundered through the hall.

'Thou dog! Thou lying lover of a shameless woman! For thy crime and for that false saying thou shalt surely die! As for thy wanton, she shall live scorned like a widow till she does my bidding! On the day when the rogue elephant kneels to crush thy body to shapelessness, she shall watch from the balcony! Thou shalt go to thy death alone!'

There followed silence: then, as the guards turned to lead away their prisoner, the crowd fell apart and a gaunt figure pressed its way to the centre of the hall. The murmuring broke out again:

'Tis Sattyamurti! Sattyamurti the Saint!'

Before the throne, his burning eyes fixed on the Rajah, the Saint stood motionless.

'O King!—there is a request!' he cried loudly, so that all might hear.

The Rajah scowlingly demanded: 'Is this a time for requests? For what dost thou ask, then?'

Sattyamurti answered him valiantly: 'For the life of a man!'

The Rajah's frown deepened. 'What is thy concern in this matter?' he demanded. 'Since when do holy men champion the cause of traitors? Is it not given to a king to punish a guilty subject?'

'Verily, it is within the power of kings to punish their subjects,' the Saint admitted dryly. 'But the Gods can punish kings! And in this affair I see clearly the trace of the Devil's Finger, the Chain of Calamity starting with a smear of honey upon a doorway—'

'What prating is this?' the Rajah began impatiently; but the Saint would not be stayed.

'Nay, listen, O King!' he cried. 'For to the forging of three links of the chain I myself was a witness. Beware, therefore, how thou addest to the chain even one link! It may be that this world and all things in it are but *Maya*—Illusion: yet it is possible that some day there will come a reckoning. It may be that thou thyself art now in the very jaws of Death!'

The Rajah sat moodily frowning. He knew full well that he had enemies; he knew in what veneration Sattyamurti was held by the people. To repeal the death-sentence at the holy man's behest would be accounted an act of kingly clemency. Moreover, there might be an even choicer method of satisfying his vengeance!

At length he spoke. 'Thy request is granted, O Sattyamurti! Nevertheless, this upstart's offence justly merits retribution. He shall not die! Throughout the remainder of his life he shall be cherished—as a man cherishes his favourite bird, in a cage, with a little bread and water!'

As he finished speaking, there arose a hubbub at the back of the hall. Bauna the Dwarf was thrust forward. He had been

caught that morning, said his captors, concealed in a house in the city.

Before the tittering company, his grotesque features distorted by terror, his hands clipped together in a cleft bamboo, he stumbled forward and fell grovelling at the foot of the throne.

'Mercy! Great King!' he wailed. 'By the cow's tail will I swear that I was ignorant of this misdoing!'

'Thou didst not know, forsooth?'

'I swear it! How could I play a part in such an infamy? I, the King's most loyal slave! I, who dare not tread even upon the King's shadow!'

Rajah Nal Singh was growing weary. It was time for his morning draught of opium-water.

'Twas thy duty to have known, to have informed those in authority!' he growled. 'I need no fools in my service! Thy goods are forfeit, and let this very night find thee far beyond my dominions!'

Blubbing his gratitude, the dwarf scrambled to his feet. And as he passed from the hall, the Princess cast at him a look bitterly scornful. Even Bauna had forsaken her!

But before dawn, while she lay, dry-eyed and sleepless, with sobbing Hasamurti in her chamber, she heard a tapping at the window.

Bauna crept in. 'Lady,' he whispered, 'the horses are ready and the guards are bribed. But there is need for haste!'

The Princess answered him proudly: 'I deal not with cowards! How should I know that this is not a trap set by thy master?'

Bauna replied patiently: 'I pray you believe me, lady! Could a man, who was himself a prisoner, help others?'

Still she doubted. 'While Jai Singh is captive, I leave not the palace!' she flung at him.

The dwarf grinned: 'Gold is a sure key to a prison-lock! He awaits us with the horses.'

Joyfully she believed him; and before the morning's sun had mounted spear-high they came in sight of Dhola Rai's encampment spread across the plain.

On the day and at the hour declared propitious by the astrologers, the army marched against Kamber. The omen had been favourable; a partridge calling from the left. At daybreak Jai Singh

and Dhola Rai had pledged mutual fidelity, had exchanged turbans, dipping their hands in salt.

The mighty host surged forward to the din of monster kettle-drums, trumpets and cymbals. Jai Singh and Dhola Rai rode in the van, leading the horsemen equipped with swords and lances. Round the great orange standard was a picked escort; warriors clad in saffron, their faces stained with the yellow turmeric, vowed to the death! Then followed bowmen and pikemen and men armed with sharp-edged metal discs and the dreaded 'tiger's-claw.'

Last of all came the elephants, clanking in body-armour, tolling their brazen bells, their howdahs packed with javelin-men. There would be work, later, for the lumbering beasts, trampling over the heaps of slain to ram the city gates.

On Moti, the gigantic war-elephant, rode the Princess. Against her lover, minded to leave her in safety, she had turned rebellious. Facing him, splendid in chain-mail emblazoned with the sun-emblem, she had cried imperiously:

'Nay, but I go with thee! Am I the first woman of the Rajputs to follow her lord to battle?'

So she prevailed, and climbed to the rocking howdah, where Bauna might shelter her with his leathern buckler.

At noonday battle was joined; and from the first the fortunes of war were with Jai Singh. Word had gone forth of who had been his father; and Rajah Nal Singh's troops had little stomach for the fight. A rumour flew through the ranks that, desperate of victory, the Rajah lay dead in his citadel, slain by his own hand. Straightway the enemy fled, pursued by shouting horsemen.

The trumpets blared the call for the final onset. Jai Singh, sheathing his dripping blade, climbed to his lady's side. The elephant, his trunk upraised, wallowed across the moat to a patch of firm, dry land before the fortress gate.

There arose, then, imminent danger to the Princess. Arrows were raining from the battlements, rattling on leathern shields, bristling in the howdah-front like quills upon a porcupine. Ahead was the massive barrier studded with iron spikes, which Moti dared not face. In vain his driver strove to urge him forward: swinging his trunk, he searched this way and that, but nowhere could he find even a truss of grass to serve as a forehead-pad against those threatening barbs. From the battlements the arrows still rained down.

'Bauna!' the Princess cried. 'Is there no way to force for us a passage?'

For a moment Bauna tarried, perplexed. Then, with the laugh of a brave man facing death, he gave her answer.

'There is a way, O my Princess!' he cried.

They watched him leap from the howdah, shout to Moti an order: too late they understood his sacrifice! The slate-grey trunk curled out, coiled round that valiant body, heaved it aloft for a brow-pad, obtained a purchase.

The soul of Bauna the Dwarf joined the souls of the warrior-heroes in the Mansion of the Sun—and the gate crashed open!

It was long past dark when Sattyamurti reached the bluff above the sacred river. It was the hour for his evening meditation.

And whilst he stood there, scanning the distant hills, there slunk from the darkened mango-grove behind him one of the fleeing soldiery, a lowering giant, his garments stained with blood. With opium-reddened eyeballs he glared at the Saint.

'A curse on thee!' he snarled. 'Thou meddlesome old crow! But for thine interference, Jai Singh, the upstart, had been dead ere now, and I not masterless!' His hand whipped to his sword-hilt.

Sattyamurti turned to him solemnly, with outflung arms.

'Behold! The last link in the chain!' he cried. 'Strike, then. I fear not.'

The sword-point flickered to its mark.

Before the eyes of the dying Saint there came a vision: illimitable space, through which a cold wind blew and the planets wheeled on their courses, beyond them a great white light. Then these, too, vanished.

Gasping, he raised himself upon one elbow.

'Lo, there is nothing!' he murmured. 'Only *Maya*—Illusion!'

Yet, had they known of this, Jai Singh and the Princess would have deemed him mistaken.

Often they mourned the death of Bauna the Dwarf; but they had other things to think of: the cares and joys of ruling, children and the pleasant government of a home.

For they were young and in love with one another, and the world seemed to them very good!

## TWO ENCOUNTERS.

It was late afternoon on a day wilder and worst than most in a disastrous summer. A wet wind blew over the downs, and though the sky, here and there, showed signs of clearing, there still was a low growling of thunder. I drove homewards in a car that had twice been drenched in three hours. Black rooks rose lazily with flapping wings on each side of the road. Newly fledged yellow-hammers flitted distractedly in front of me, seeming unable to take refuge in the hedges, so that I had to slow down or to hit against their tiny bodies. A weasel crossed warily and craftily almost under the wheels, and once a great leaping hare did his best to commit suicide at my expense, until he suddenly made up his muddled mind, thought better of it, and sped away across a rain-beaten cornfield.

Turning a corner in a road narrowed by the uncut hay in the banks, I ran unexpectedly into an enormous flock of sheep. There must have been some three hundred or more. Strong fat little fellows with golden fleeces that seemed to gleam in the grey evening light. Their faces were black, charming and foolish.

Already frightened by a motor-van which had pulled up some way off to let them pass, they advanced rapidly towards me in a wave of panting hot creatures and a crest of black heads; with all the baaing and bleating that a surging sea of sheep might produce. They broke on me, so to speak; hurled themselves against the car as on a rock, and recoiled, dismayed and terrified.

The sheep in front turned and ran. Those behind still dashed forwards. Both met in the middle with an impact which forced them upon each other's backs. Every gamut of lamentable sheep voices filled the air. The sounds were so strange that one could hardly help laughing, though one watched with the greatest anxiety. Surely in their agitation they would break each others' legs as they pushed their neighbours up on the slippery banks only to fall into the road again. Behind all this commotion, far down the road I saw the patient shepherd, a tall erect figure, trying to induce the sheep near him to move onwards, helped by his well-trained dogs. There was also a juvenile but stalwart assistant. This youth was sent by a devious path in the adjacent fields to

deal with the animals in which my car was engulfed. Eventually his tactics were successful. Taking a large struggling sheep in his arms, he placed it forcibly behind the car, turning it in the direction in which it should advance. Once started, the other beasts would follow him as a leader. Twice, three times, the manœuvre failed. But the fourth time, the animal, whether from terror or courage, dashed onwards. Bleating and calling, the whole flock followed; at first hysterically, then panic-stricken and knocking against each other; then more calmly; and finally a sedate remnant walking as though excitements were far from them, was brought up by the shepherd and the dogs.

The shepherd's face seemed vaguely familiar to me. He was notable to look at, with clear-cut features and bright blue eyes, tall and straight, and well dressed in his dun-coloured working clothes and gaiters, and his soft felt hat. Almost, I thought, a trifle self-consciously got up for the part; I seemed to have met him in a dream; he was connected in my mind with something poignant. Was it my fancy or was there also a vague recognition, a puzzled remembrance in his face? Coming up to me he stopped and took off his hat. 'Tis too bad,' he said in a pleasant voice, 'to have kept you so long. My sheep aren't accustomed to roads and have seldom seen a car. I am sorry to have wasted your time like this.'

As he spoke he seemed to remember. His expression changed and almost automatically he repeated with a strange far-off look, 'I'm sorry to have wasted your time like this.' He looked at me earnestly for a moment, touched his hat, and passed on. Like a fool I sat gazing after him. He turned once and smiled and touched his hat again. I wanted to call: 'Where have I met you? What was it you told me? Where did I hear you say those very words before? Why do I know that the other time you gave me no chance to answer? That I wanted to help and could not. That there was no way of helping.'

It was paralysing. Had I spoken I might have known what I answered. But now nothing came into my mind. I sat in the car thinking. In another mood I might have turned and followed his slow progress with the sheep. The motor-van, perhaps thinking that another route was safer than the certainty of again overtaking the flock, had taken a side road and left me. And if I followed, what then? Confronted with the shepherd, a strange young man whom perhaps I never met before, what should I say?



'Where did I hear you speak those words before?' and he would say, 'What words?' And I would say—why, it would be too foolish; not to be thought of. I started the car and drove on. But the voice haunted me. Not that it brought with it any informing vision. On the contrary. It was a memory of hearing and not of sight. The words were ordinary and old-fashioned. 'Wasting my time.' It was amusing to hear anyone nowadays treat time as a concrete thing, a stuff which might be wasted or saved or lost. And the shepherd spoke as though he had some responsibility, in that it was he who had made me waste it. If he valued time in that way it seemed a pity that he should be professionally connected with sheep, the last animal, one would think, to save one's time in any way. How absurd the whole thing was, and why could I not forget the shepherd's face?

The incident baffled and worried me. More because it hung on some link in the chain of memory that was broken, than from any other reason.

That evening in the flickering light of a big wood fire I dreamed and thought over the past. A pale mist showed through a window whose curtain was not drawn, and the moon shone wanly outside. What made me get up hurriedly to pull the curtain? Oddly enough it had some vague connection with the shepherd.

Then I remembered. Slowly a picture formed itself in my mind. At first it was dim; then it gradually cleared into a sharply outlined presentment. The fire-lit room with its bowls of scented roses faded away. I was in a soldiers' hostel, and it was war-time in London.

I sat behind a counter which was at once a little shop for elementary objects such as boot-laces, mending cotton, and buttons, a tobacco stall, and a bank in which one locked away the men's money if they willed, storing it in numbered bags in a safe. (It was an anxiety, that bank, as in an air raid when the hostel was 'evacuated' the money had to be taken out and it and one's self had to fly to a sheltered place, which was usually very uncomfortable, and always very boring.)

The air was thick with cigarette smoke, and the blinds closely drawn. The canteen was very full. Men were beginning to get their leave from the front, and overseas lads were coming to England for training. That night there were a quantity of good-looking boys from Nova Scotia, who spoke Gaelic, and wore feathers (afterwards discarded) in their bonnets. Soldiers' hostels were less

plentiful than later, and rules less stringent, so that even if you could not supply them with a cubicle or bed, you might doss down the lads in deck-chairs with a great armful of blankets. And often, literally with tears in their eyes, they would beg to do this rather than to be turned out to a new hostel which they did not feel was a home. There they sat, laughing for the most part, and eating their simple meals, which were indeed exceedingly well cooked, with good appetite. So that I was surprised to notice that a specially nice-looking man just home from the front, who sat at a table near me, twice let his dinner grow cold and sent it away untasted. Evidently he had money, as each time, in an absent-minded way he ordered a fresh supply.

With his elbows on the table and his head bowed in his hands he seemed to be thinking, thinking, overwhelmed with life. Could he be ill, with that semblance of perfect health? Was it depression, was it fatigue? I watched to see his full face, for you cannot read character until both eyes are visible, and the two corners of the mouth. A weakness or a hardness or a shiftiness then becomes apparent.

Suddenly the boy turned his head, caught my inspection and smiled. He had good honest eyes, and a frank expression. He got up and came over for cigarettes. We discussed the weather and his leave. It was long since he had been home. He puzzled me because he was at the same time so unsophisticated, and so cultivated. I could not place him. Then my commercial activities became absorbing and he turned away.

I had forgotten about him in the busy time following, when an inspector came in and told me that the blinds of the large window behind me were allowing beams of light to fall through. (At that time it was considered necessary by the authorities that the London lights should be concealed.) I got into difficulties with my window curtains, and my new acquaintance appeared to help. Strange it was, that it was this small link, this quite accidental connection between the window blind and the lights that had snapshotted the scene on my memory and turned back my thoughts on those of far-off dream-like days. Dream-like because so unconnected with any normal life, so beyond the pale of everyday existence.

Well, it was then, in a lull of the business of the hostel, that my friend began to talk. It seemed to be a relief to him. He was starting for home next morning, and I think that, perhaps unconsciously, he needed to disburden himself of overwhelming

feeling. Once war had appeared splendid to him. Now life was bitter. Bitter because of the breaking down of ideals, and because the reality was more terrible than any imagination, or certainly more awful than his own mind could have pictured. Courage and self-sacrifice were not enough to right the balance. Then there was the deterioration of character. Yes, that was it, the deterioration.

I marvelled to hear him speak with such painful precision. That he was no 'funk' seemed clear, and the stripes on his arm showed that he had been given quick promotion for such a young man. He did not complain of hardship, and personal danger did not seem to come into consideration. One hesitated always to question, but this time, after a little pause :

'What were you before the War?' I asked.

'I wanted to be a monk.'

'You still can be.'

'No, that is all over and done with. I can't go back to the old life. Not yet, anyhow.'

A look of extreme pain came over his face. Then in a more easy way he added :

'My Colonel has recommended me for a commission.'

He leaned forward and looked earnestly in my face.

'It's too bad to have kept you so long. I am not accustomed to tell my thoughts, and lately there has been no one to whom I could have spoken. Forgive me for having taken up your time. I am so sorry to have wasted your time.'

Before I could answer he had shaken hands with me, had saluted, smiled, and gone out into the darkness. I never saw him again.

There it was ; there was the connection. The very words my shepherd had used, and unusual ones to hear in a soldiers' hostel. Was the shepherd identical with my friend of the canteen, older, saner, more steadied in nerve ? Why had he become a shepherd, and was he a real shepherd or only masquerading ? A man of education who chose to drive his own sheep along the road. I pulled myself together with an effort. Was I wasting my time merely in remembrances, in dreaming ? But how absurd to let such an idea influence me. Yet to the man in the hostel, to the shepherd, time was still a precious thing. If it had an existence intangible but real, in our cosmos, you could make it useless or valuable at your will : you could save it or spend it. You were responsible for it. Really I could not think out the question

again. Once I had quite convinced myself that time was a mere illusion.

And whether the two men were one, or if the similarity was accidental I shall never know. Yet to me the coincidence is so strange that it admits of only one solution. The young soldier and the shepherd were indeed the same. Though why our paths should have crossed in this mysterious fashion, for that I have no explanation.

I am so sorry to have wasted your time.

A. F. TROTTER.

## THERMOPYLÆ.

BY J. LESLIE MITCHELL.

## I.

To see the face that launched a thousand ships peep from below a poke-bonnet at a street-corner confessional induces a sense of shock that speedily passes into irritation. Such face, you feel, no doubt had once its appropriate function and setting; but in the twentieth century it is fantastic. Horatius kept his bridge well enough for the purpose of inspiring later ages to juvenile recitation; reincarnated as a gangster with a machine-gun in a Chicagoan alley he loses charm. Leonidas and his Spartans, holding liberty and Thermopylæ against the hosts of Asia, were heroes, but—

And you stand, a strayed tourist in the unfrequented warrens of Cairo, and stare at that wall and inscription in the Sharia el Ghorairb.

It rises high, this street-wall that girds the rear of some ancient khan. It glimmers dour and brown and unremarkable, all the length of it—except at this one spot. For here, from a distance of three feet upwards, the dried mud is pitted and flaked as though, in its liquid state, it had been pelted with pebbles. Below those marks of an incomprehensible hail-storm, a great red stain is a dull blotch in the sun-shimmer, and carved into that blotch, in letters Greek and gigantic, is the single word

## ΘΕΡΜΟΠΥΛΑΙ

You stare at it and transliterate Thermopylæ; you go closer and see a line of smaller lettering. A quotation—a familiar enough quotation.

*A misascribed quotation.*

Who really spoke it? You wander back in thought to forgotten pages of a forgotten history-lesson. Of course! Not Rhizos—whoever he was—but Dienekes of Sparta when they told him the Persian arrow-hail would darken the sun. . . .

Fantastic thing to find inscribed on the wall of a Cairene khan!

## II.

It stood a wall still uninscribed that night seventeen years ago when the weavers of Selitsa—over thirty of them, men, women, and children, clinging to pathetic and parlous packages wherein were shrouded their dismembered looms—tumbled out of the Alexandria train into the dark inhospitality of Cairo Central Station.

'Are you all here?' roared Georgios Londres, a trifle mechanically, when they grouped round him outside the station gates. They chorussed a tired and optimistic yes. Londres ran his eye over them, scratched his head, considered the flowing darknesses and jaundiced lightnings that were Cairo, and seemed a little at a loss.

'Then—we're here, then.'

Here indeed at last they were—Sina, with his wife and mother and two daughters; the Latas; the Vasos; the little thin widower with a single son and a name like a battle-cry, Kolocrotoni; these, the others, and the two who were the group's actual, if unnominated, leaders, little Trikoupi and the giant Londres. Here in Cairo at last. . . .

'What shall we do now, Big Londres?' piped ten-years-old Rhizos Trikoupi from the side of his father, Elia. He voiced the silent questionings of the party.

The giant of Selitsa yawned, ear-achingly, and found solution in the yawn. His silhouette vanished, materialising to view again as a dim recumbency.

'We'll sleep. I haven't had a wink since we left Dourale. . . .'

## III.

There was no moon that night, but presently the coming of a fine frostiness of stars. In that starlight the Greek weavers huddled in an uneasy rhythm of sleep beneath the bland bass snorings of giant Londres.

The winter nights are cold in Cairo—as you may have noticed from the terrace of the Continental. And long—when you lie on damp cobble-stones and your body exudes heat and inhales rheumatism in enthusiastic accord with some mystic law of physics. Young Rhizos Trikoupi was never to forget the feel of those cobble-stones under his insufficiently-padded hip: it was so bad he thought the cobbles must ache almost as much as he did. . . .

A late train chugged out of Cairo. He raised himself on his elbow and watched its wavering comet-tail of sparks grow dim and

disappear. Perhaps on board it was some Greek returning to Greece—Cairo to Alexandria, Alexandria by unending discomforts of the trading boat to Dourale, Dourale to—perhaps someone on board that train would even journey up from Dourale to Mother Selitsa in the eparchy of Oitylos!

Once Spartic of the Spartans, Selitsa town. But its weaving community had fallen on evil days and were near to starving when Londos, a lumbering Moses, knocked from door to door and at each delivered his ultimatum.

‘Stay here—and starve; abroad—we may eat. Greece buys but the goods of the American machines; Mother Selitsa has no need of us—but she’s sent our reputation abroad. Such cloths as ours still sell well in Egypt. Let us go there.’

And here the most of them were—the last of their money gone in fares for their varied and uneaseful journeyings—sleeping on the Cairene cobble-stones, waiting for the dawn.

Rhizos laid his head down again, and again sought sleep. But, with a pallor upon the stars, the night had grown colder than ever. He found young Kolocrotoni awake near him, and they conversed in whispers, looking at a sky that grew darker and darker in the moment before morning, and then was suddenly aflaunt, all along the flat roof-spaces, with the blown streamers of a host of crimson banners. The boys stared raptly, the cold forgotten.

‘When we’ve beds,’ averred young Kolocrotoni, cautiously, ‘it mayn’t be so bad to live here.’

Rhizos remembered giant Londos’s promise. ‘Our Mother has a fortune waiting us here.’

#### IV.

And then——

Were this still no more than prelude I might sing you a very pretty Odyssey indeed of the wanderings of those Selitsa weavers in search of a place in Cairo wherein to lay their heads. Penniless, full of hope, and much be-cursed by the Greek consul, Londos and Elia Trikoupi tramped the streets while the other males guarded the women and looms and grew hungry and thirsty and were evicted by carbine’d gendarmes now from one squatting-place, now another. For Cairo declared itself overcrowded and poverty-stricken already. ‘Go back to Selitsa,’ said Cairo, literally and in effect. Whereat Londos, an uncultured man, cursed it forcibly. ‘We’ll stay in Cairo and set up our looms,’ said he, ‘on a midden—if need be.’



Not that they might not have found employment. But they had learnt, they and generations before them, tenacity in the bitter Peloponnesus. They were determined, with an altogether regrettable archaic obstinacy, to erect their own looms, not to work for others. They found an archway under which they were allowed to camp, and there endured existence for three days until on the third midnight giant Londos returned to them in some excitement and shot the sleepers out of sleep, and some of them nearly out of their wits, with his shout:

‘I’ve found it!’

Dazed and drowsy, they packed up and set out after him, tramping through the dark Cairene streets for hours, a grotesque procession enough. Until beyond the Bab el Zuweiya, and at the foot of the Sharia el Ghoraib, Londos halted and pointed. And the place to which he had brought them was the cul-de-sac wherein the sharia terminated, a waste space of half an acre amid the high walls of the surrounding khans. Once it had been a rubbish depository, but had been long abandoned for even that purpose. Yet still from the ancient buried offal arose a sickening odour.

It troubled even the nostrils of the gentle Elia Trikoupi, no æsthete. ‘Has it not—a little perfume?’ he asked, turning diffident eyes on the giant. Whereat Londos’s immense laugh boomed out over the sleeping Warrens, startlingly. The other Greeks took it up. They stood and rocked with laughter in that Cairene midnight, hungry, forsaken, light-hearted. The giant of Selitsa wiped his eyes.

‘Little Perfume—what a name for our midden! You have christened it, Elia!’

## V.

They set to building sheds on the edge of it next day—the waste and odoriferous piece of land claimed by no one, the seeming haunt of half the pariah dogs and all the amorous cats of Cairo. They tramped to the edge of the town, to Nile-bank, to the Greek quarter, begging, borrowing and stealing stray pieces of timber and canvas. They delved out foundations at the edge of the waste—the smells that arose were dreadful—and drew up the huts at an angle fronting towards the Sharia el Ghoraib. In three days the huts were almost habitable. And then Londos procured a slab of wood and

a piece of charcoal and, grinningly, scrawled a legend on the slab, and nailed it up above the angle hut:

‘Little Perfume.’

They were on an island, the Selitsa settlers—an exceedingly dry island. There was no water nearer at hand than that in the public fountain at the far end of the Sharia el Ghoraib. From this fountain water had to be fetched—a task which fell to the children, for the older settlers from Selitsa, men and women, betook themselves to the looms as soon as these were erected. On an advance of yarn and silk they set to weaving the mantles that had already won them reputation in Egypt, and the straggling, hourly procession of children making towards the fountain would hear the thump and boom, rise and fall, behind them in every hut of Little Perfume.

It seemed to them the only friendly sound in Cairo. The sharia looked on them sourly, and at the fountain itself they would find the Arab hosts marshalled to give battle—children who threw stones and dirt, and spat with some venom. Ring-leader of this Asiatic opposition was a small, ferocious and underclad girl whose favourite amusement was to drop dust-bricks into the fountain just prior to the arrival of Rhizos and his companions. Rhizos bided his opportunity, found it one afternoon, dropped his bucket, pursued the damsel, tucked her head under his arm in a business-like if unchivalrous fashion, and proceeded to punch her with great heartiness. . . . But such satisfactions were few enough, and wilted in retrospect on the painful return march to Little Perfume, with small arms aching and small back breaking and the conviction deep in one’s heart that some meddler had elongated the sharia in one’s absence. . . .

That was in late winter and for a time the locality was endurable. But the summer drew on. Desperately engrossed as they were in the attempt to find an opening for their wares in the Egyptian markets, the Selitsa settlers had borne with their strangely-odoured habitat uncomplainingly. They rose with the first blink of daylight, into those fervid Cairene mornings when the air is unthinkably pure and the day for an hour has the hesitating loveliness of a lovely woman, and cooked their scanty breakfasts and set to work at their looms. They ceased not even at the failing of the light, but took to the coarser work under the glimmer of great tallow candles, giant Londres and the gentle Elia leading in feats

of endurance. Sometimes it was midnight before the humming of the looms would cease, and Londres, a little unsteady, would lumber out of doors to look up at the splendour of the Cairene moon and chuckle tiredly as he caught the glitter of moonlight on the notice-board of the settlement.

But the summer drew on, and with it each morning arose from the waste of Little Perfume, as though a foul beast hibernated underfoot, a malodorous breath of a vileness unendurable. With it came clouds of mosquitoes—insects rare enough in Cairo—and hordes of flies. By midday the ancient dunghill had a faint mist. In a fortnight two of the Greek children were dead and half of the community was sick in bed.

The evening of the day on which they buried the children Londres stalked to the door of the hut where Trikoupi leant pallidly over his loom and little Rhizos knelt by the heap of sacking on which his mother slept uneasily.

‘Come out, Elia.’

So Elia went out, and waited. Londres strode up and down in the evening light, debating with himself, once stopping and throwing out his arms hopelessly. Then he halted in front of the gentle Trikoupi.

‘There is only one thing we can do, Elia.’

‘Leave Little Perfume?’ Elia had guessed this was coming.

‘No, remove it.’ Londres pointed to the waste hillock towering away behind the huts. ‘We must shift that, and quickly.’

Trikoupi stared at him as though he had gone mad. ‘Remove it? But how? And where?’

Londres indicated the lowering of the Moqattam Hills in the sunset. ‘There. It is two miles away, beyond the town boundaries.’

‘But move this hill—It is a month’s work for scores of men.’

Londres nodded. ‘And we must do it in a fortnight—if our children are to live.’

## VI.

They did it. It turned in the telling of later years into an epic of struggle, a thing of heroism and great feats, intermingled with shouted laughter. The fatigue and horror and weariness the years came to cover with the tapestry of legend: how Londres, stripped to a breech-clout, dug and excavated and filled every one of the sacks and baskets for four days on end, the while the others bore

them on their two-mile journey—Londos, gigantic, unsleeping, pausing now and then to drink the coffee brought him, and vomit up that coffee at the next nest of dreadful stench and even more dreadful refuse his shovel uncovered; how the gentle Trikoupi bore loads without ceasing, day or night, till he was found walking in his sleep, a babbling automaton; how the women, laughed at and pelted by the Cairenes, bore load for load with the men; how three died in that Iliad—one of them, the Vasos mother, by the pits beyond the walls—and there was no time to bury their corpses; how the police descended on the excavators and gave them a time-limit in which to finish the work; how in desperation the weaver Gemadios went to Citadel in the dark hours of one night and stole a great English Army hand-cart, and worked with it for two days (doing feats in the removal of offal) and then returned it, the theft still undiscovered; how——

They did it. It was cleared at last. The burning Cairene sunshine smote down on ragged floors, once the floors of some Mameluke's palace, perhaps, in the days of Cairo's greatness. Underneath those floors was plentitude of bricks and stonework. And the odours died and passed, and the weavers, men and women, reeled to their huts and flung themselves down beside their looms and slept and slept, and woke and groaned with aching muscles, and slept again.

Little Rhizos Trikoupi, staggering to the fountain alone that night with an endrapement of pitchers, found seated on the coping the ferocious little female whose head he had once punched. She sat and regarded him without apparent hostility. He disregarded her, ostentatiously.

But as he lifted up the laden jars she came to his side.

'I'll help,' she said, friendly of voice.

She bore a jar to the confines of Little Perfume. There she set it down and smiled at Rhizos. 'My name is Zara,' she said, inconsequently. Then told him disastrous tidings, casually. 'They are not to allow any more of your people to carry water from the fountain to the Place of Stinks.'

## VII.

It was a crushing blow. Londos and Elia Trikoupi went and argued with the ward-masters. But they refused to be moved. All of them except Muslih, a Nationalist and father of that advanced feminist Zara, were quite openly hostile to the Greeks.

The fountain was intended to supply the streets which surrounded it, not such carrion-grubbers as might settle in abandoned middens. . . .

That evening Londos himself, bidding the children stay at home, went for water with two great buckets. He came back hatless and bleeding, but grinning, with a jeering, stone-pelting crowd behind him. But the buckets were full. He put them down, emptied them into the settlement's jars, and started out again. By the fountain-coping three men still lay and groaned where he had left them. He refilled the buckets.

But next morning Rhizos and young Kolocrotoni, scouting, came back to tell that there was a policeman on guard at the fountain. Giant Londos swore at that information and scratched his head. It was one thing to crack the cranium of the stray and obstreperous Cairene, another to do the same to a gendarme. The Greeks collected to debate the matter, Elia Trikoupi, dust-covered from exploring the uncovered floors of Little Perfume, arriving last.

'Abandon Little Perfume now we will not,' swore Londos. 'Not though we have to carry water from the Nile itself. Those lawyers! Elia, we'll rear that son of yours to be one and defend our interests. Then we may drink in peace.'

'We may drink before that,' said Trikoupi, gently. 'If you will all come with me—'

They went with him. He led them to the middle of the waste of Little Perfume. In the ground was a circular depression filled with earth and building rubbish. Londos stared at it and then embraced Trikoupi.

'A well—once a well. And we'll make it one again.' He threw off his coat, groaned like a bull at an ache that leapt to fiery being between his shoulder-blades, and called for a spade. 'This will clinch for ever our right. We can start building. We can start making gardens.' He sighed, almost regretfully. 'The great tale of Little Perfume is over.'

### VIII.

But indeed, could he have known it, they had lived no more than its prelude. Almost unnoticed, yet weaving assiduously into the web and woof of Cairene life stray threads of story-plot from Little Perfume, the War years passed over Egypt. Demand for the products of the looms that had once hummed in Selitsa grew

in volume and value. Nor did the aftermath bring any slump. The settlers flourished.

Yet out of its profits the little community succeeded in banking scarcely a piastre. Replacing the saving instinct of generations a new habit had grown upon the weavers—the enrichment and embellishment of Little Perfume. Its gardens grew famous throughout the Warrens. They even planted trees—quick-growing Australian trees procured by Rhizos Trikoupis when he learnt of those plants in botany lessons. A great shed, built of mud-bricks, airy and cool and flat-roofed, gradually rose to being in the centre of the one-time rubbish depository. This was the communal loom-shed. Round it, one by one, were built the houses of the weavers—twelve houses with much space and garden-room. Those houses at night were lighted no longer by candles, but by electricity. The long-tapped well brought water to each. . . . Londres, gigantic still, but bulkier, slower, than of yore, would sometimes walk away down the Sharia el Ghoraib and then wheel round abruptly, in order to shock himself into fresh surprise over the miracle of Little Perfume. He would stand and stare at it fascinatedly, and so was standing one evening in October when young Rhizos Trikoupis, the law-student returning from his studies in Cairo, hailed him as he came down the sharia.

‘Dreaming again, *papakes*?’

‘Eh?’ The giant started. ‘Ah, you, Rhizos. And how much have you learned to-day?’ He chuckled. ‘Apart from the shape of the ear of Zara Muslih, I mean.’

Rhizos coloured a trifle, and attractively. Daily, almost, he and Zara, both students at the University, travelled into Cairo together. Her father, the fervid progressive and friend of the Greeks, had determined to give her such education as would shock her mother and every other veiled woman east of the Bab el Zuweiya. . . . She had certainly lovely ears.

Londres chuckled again, clapping an ungentle hand on the law-student’s shoulder.

‘And why not? But remember you are our Samson, and there must be no Delilahs.’

‘There are no Philistines,’ said Rhizos, tolerantly, and then nodded back towards the Sharia el Ghoraib, the street which had stood decaying ever since that midnight when the Selitsa settlers passed through it to the conquest of the ancient offal-heap. ‘At least, not nearer than the sharia! What is happening there?’

'Eh? Oh, the house-breaking in the upper half?' Londres shrugged indifferently, his eyes on the night-shadowed peace of Little Perfume. 'Its owner following our lead at last—it has taken him ten years. Clearing away the huts and building houses, I hear. Site-prices are soaring high in Cairo.'

## IX.

Cairo, indeed, was advancing in Westernisation in great strides. Site-prices had doubled and trebled since the War. New buildings were springing up in every ward of the ancient city of the Mamelukes. Nor were effects unforeseen and numerous enough slow to erupt from all that causal activity. Title-deeds and land-rights were everywhere being questioned and overhauled, claim and counter-claim jostled one the other in every lawyer's office. And presently, from the midst of this maelstrom of modernisation, a long wave reached out and burst like a thunder-clap against the shores of Little Perfume.

Twenty-four hours after that talk with Londres, Rhizos returned to find his father, the giant, Vasos, and old Sina in anxious consultation over a long tri-lingual typescript. They cried out their relief at sight of him, and Londres handed over the document.

'It was wise to train this son of yours, Elia,' he said, and wiped his forehead. '*He* will deal with it.'

Rhizos took the crinkling sheets of paper and sat down and read them, and presently was aware of a deafening, sickening beat of blood around his own ears.

It was a notice to the effect that the site-property of El Ghorair, 'commonly known as Little Perfume,' was required by its owner for building purposes, and that the Greek squatters at present in occupation must vacate it within a month's time.

## X.

The Greeks took the case to the courts, Rhizos engaging a lawyer on behalf of the settlement. But even with this development Londres and the older weavers refused to treat the claim seriously.

'An owner for Little Perfume?' said Londres. 'It must be the man in the moon. Or of a certainty a lunatic.'

He proved less unharmed. They caught their first glimpse of him as the case was being tried—a *rentier*, a Parisian Egyptian



of the new generation, suave, sleek, and bored. His lawyers submitted the claim with a casualness which was deceptive. It covered certainty. El Ghoraib, together with the near-by Sharia el Ghoraib, had been the property of the Falih family from time immemorial. The title-deeds were impeccable.

'Why did you not evict the squatters before?' demanded the Greeks' lawyer.

Falih smiled. 'Because until recently I'd forgotten El Ghoraib's existence.' He added coolly: 'And I make no claim on the squatters now, provided they leave the site undamaged.'

It was as heartless a case as had come within his province, said the Egyptian judge in a curt summary. Nevertheless, there could be no disputing the claim of Falih.

Judgment was entered accordingly, and Londos and Trikoupi, acting for the settlers, allowed to appeal.

The appeal was quashed.

## XI.

The news was brought to Little Perfume. Giant Londos, shrunken, rheumatism-crippled, stared from Rhizos to his father, then around the circle gathered to hear the news—all old men, bent with toil at their looms. Rhizos could not meet that stricken look in the eyes of the giant whose labours in clearing the rubbish-waste were already legendary.

'But—it means we go out of here as we came! It is impossible,' said Londos, and burst into tears. . . . The old men sat silent, but Rhizos slipped out of the gathering and walked the Cairene evening in a red passion of anger. He found himself at length outside the door of the Muslih house, at the other end of the Sharia el Ghoraib. It was a familiar enough door to him and in a moment it was closing behind him the while he made his way to the room where Zara sat over books and lecture-notes. At sight of him she rose eagerly.

'The appeal?'

He laughed. 'Quashed. Falih can evict us when he chooses.'

She kindled from his own anger. 'It's a shame—oh, a damned shame! Those old men and women who have worked such a miracle. . . . Can't they claim compensation?'

'They can take away nothing but the looms they brought. We're liable to prosecution if we damage the very houses we've built.'

She looked at him in helpless pity. 'Surely something can be done? If only that Bill were passed in the Chamber!'

'What Bill?' he asked, indifferently.

He had been too busy heeding to the court cases to know of outside events that might affect them. He listened half-unlistening, until meaning of what she was saying penetrated the cloud of his anger.

'A Bill enforcing value-compensation for improved sites—to become law as soon as passed! That would mean Falih would never dare evict us from Little Perfume. It would cost him too much. . . . But when will it pass?'

'They are fighting it, my father says, but it is bound to pass. When? Within the next week or so, perhaps.'

'Too late. If only——'

He began to walk up and down the room, Zara looking at him. He stopped and stared at her, absently. They had each the same thought.

'If we could keep off Falih till then——'

## XII.

That was on the Monday. Next day the Greeks of Little Perfume received a notice from Falih's agent to vacate the site within twenty-four hours.

They made no attempt to comply. Instead, Rhizos went and argued with the agents. Reluctantly, those agents extended the time-limit another forty-eight hours. But they were insistent that at the end of that period the site be left vacant. Later in the day they sent a note curtailing the extra forty-eight hours to twenty-four. The growth of support for the new Bill in the Chamber had alarmed Falih.

Meantime, Rhizos organised the inhabitants of Little Perfume. At a meeting they voted him to control the situation, with young Kolocrotoni his assistant. Then they retired to uneasy beds, wondering what the next day would bring.

It brought Falih's bailiffs, four of them, knocking at the door of Trikoupi's house. The Greeks gathered round the arrivals quickly enough, while a crowd of curious Egyptians flocked in from the far end of the sharia. Nor were they hostile to the Greeks, those Egyptians. The Greeks had won their place. Here were thieves come to dispossess them. . . . The bailiffs grew angry

and frightened, beating upon Trikoupî's door. The gentle Elia opened it.

'This house must be cleared,' said the leader. He motioned forward one of the others. 'Carry out the furniture.'

Londos, who had been waiting for this, as instructed by the absent Rhizos, rose from a chair. They saw a tipsy giant behind a table littered with full and empty bottles. 'Drink first,' he invited, swayingly. 'Drink to our leaving this place of stinks. Sit down and drink.'

The bailiffs hesitated, but a growl came from the crowd pressing round the open door. Falih's men sat down and, not unwillingly, filled glasses from the bottles indicated. . . .

They passed down the Sharia el Ghorab late that evening in two arabiyehs hired by Rhizos; they passed down it drunk and roisterous and singing improper songs. They had fallen mysteriously asleep after the first drinks, had slept until afternoon and had awakened to be again forcibly regaled with draughts of the potent Greek brandy. . . . Listening to their drunken brawling receding into the evening, Rhizos turned to Zara, who had come to see the day's *dénouement*. She was flushed and laughing at the strategem's success, and he stared at the shapeliness of her ears.

'We've won the first skirmish, but to-morrow——' and his face grew dark.

She suddenly kissed him. 'Luck for to-morrow!' And was gone, leaving him staring after her breathlessly, with flushed face.

### XIII.

To-morrow——

The papers bore news of the Bill. It had passed, after a fierce struggle, into the Egyptian equivalent of the committee stage. From there it had still to emerge, still to receive the King's sanction. Rhizos read the news from the sheets of *El Ahram*, he and young Kolocrotoni together.

'Falih's men will return long before then,' said Kolocrotoni.

'They'll return to-day,' said Rhizos, 'unless we go to them instead.' He had already planned his next move. Within half an hour, after canvassing from house to house in Little Perfume, he went down into Cairo with notes to the value of three thousand piastres in his wallet. Of what he accomplished on that journey he never told. But he returned with an empty wallet and Falih's

agents did not come that day. Falih himself, indeed, had gone to Alexandria.

But Rhizos knew it was only a respite, that to buy off subsidiary agents was not to buy off Falih's lawyers. He read the news about the Bill with growing anxiety. There were difficulties in the committee stage.

'It's hopeless to wait for it,' said Kolocrotoni, dark and young and fierce. They stood together in the sunset, looking at Little Perfume from Londos' ancient stance at the mouth of the sharia. 'Better that we leave it so that this Falih will wish it were a midden again.'

'How?' asked Rhizos.

'Burn it, blow it up.'

'Blow it up? Where are you to get the explosives?'

Kolocrotoni laughed. 'That would be easy.' And he told of a warehouse in Cairo where arms were stored before being smuggled through to the Senussi. 'It is from there that the Nationalist students get their arms.'

'Could we?' asked Rhizos.

Kolocrotoni stared. He had hardly meant to be taken so seriously. 'Revolvers?'

'Yes.' Young Trikoupi seemed to be calculating rapidly. 'Or automatics. Thirteen revolvers and ammunition.'

#### XIV.

Now, as I've told, there was only one street which led into the square of Little Perfume. Down this street the next morning came a body of men, labourers and carpenters. With them was Falih's own lawyer. Gemadios's youngest son brought to the Greeks news of the invaders' approach. Giant Londos, bending over the garden-patch in front of his house, with a great hose in his hand, nodded.

The lawyer halted his host, glanced at Londos, and then walked past him. Or rather, he prepared to do so.

'I would not pass,' said Londos, in friendly tone. And added, as an anxious afterthought, 'This is the first time I have used a garden hose and I am still inexpert.'

The little lawyer turned on him angrily, and at that moment was lifted off his feet by a stream of water hitting him in the chest. He rolled out of Londos's garden, rose, and was promptly knocked down again. The hose appeared to have gone mad in the hands

of Londres. He stabbed a beam of water to and fro amid the heads of a lawyer's following. They broke and ran for the sharia, and, running, found themselves objects of suspicion to the Egyptians of the sharia's hovels.

Cries rose: 'Who are they?'

The answering cry came quickly. 'Thieves! Stop them!'

Thereat, apparently in a passion for justice, the Sharia el Ghorailb emptied a multitude of pursuers and assailants upon the followers of Falih's lawyer. They were pelted with refuse, kicked, cuffed, and finally driven ignominiously from the street. The little lawyer, beyond the reach of the last missile, turned and shouted. Zara Muslih, standing listening at the door of her father's house, heard him and went up through the laughing, excited street towards Little Perfume. Beyond the inhabited quarter, towards where the sharia terminated in the strange settlement of the Selitsa weavers, she found Rhizos Trikoupis staring up and down the two hundred yards of high, blank-faced street-wall.

'The lawyer has gone for the police.'

Rhizos nodded. 'I expected he would. But he'll take some time to change his clothes and get there. By then the police chief will be having his siesta. They'll not dare to disturb him very early in the afternoon. When they do, the lawyer will find that my father has arrived simultaneously with himself, lodging a counter-complaint of assault and damage.'

Zara's eyes sparkled. 'This is generalship. Oh, splendid!' Then her face fell. 'But how long can you keep it up—playing them off by tricks?'

'This is the last of the tricks.'

'And father says the King is almost bound to sign the Bill the day after to-morrow.'

Rhizos's eyes turned to the high, ravine-like walls about them. 'We shall keep Little Perfume until then.'

And then some realisation came to Zara of what he intended. She stared at him, sick at heart. 'But—it will be the gendarmes who will come to-morrow.'

He nodded. 'I know. And you must not come again until—after. Not down into Little Perfume, I mean. I don't want other people implicated or arrested.'

'Am I "other people"?''

He could smile at that. 'Always, for me. Apart and adorable, my dear.'

But her momentary flippancy had passed. 'Oh, it'll be madness.' Her eyes widened. 'And it's not just a scuffle you intend. *That* is why Kolocrotoni has been buying revolvers—I heard of it. . . . Rhizos—you who've always hated fighting and laughed at the dark little melodramatics of history!'

His look almost frightened her. 'Do you think I haven't hated the trickeries and treacheries of the last few days? Do you think I don't hate the dirty little pantomime we're staging now? But I'd rather mime in the dark than crawl like a coward in the sunlight.' He shuddered and passed his hands across his eyes. His voice fell to a dull flatness. 'And there'll be no fighting. Look here, Zara, I must go back.'

They touched hands, not looking at each other. She did not kiss him this time. Her eyes were suddenly blind with tears.

## XV.

That evening the Greeks—thirteen of them, young men between the ages of eighteen and thirty, and all unmarried—moved out from Little Perfume with pickaxes and shovels, and, a hundred yards along the Sharia el Ghorair, began to dig up the roadway. It was very quiet, in that hushed Cairene semi-darkness, and Rhizos Trikoupi, with knit brows and a tape-line, went from side to side of the street, measuring and calculating. It might have seemed to the casual onlooker like an ordinary gang of street workmen but for the silence that went with its operations. Young men from the representative families of the settlement—Kolocrotoni, Vasos, Sina, the two young Latas, Gemadios, Zalakosta and the others—they dug and hewed through the dried mud and were presently excavating the ancient paving-stones. From behind them there was silence also in all the locked and shuttered houses of Little Perfume. Even the looms had ceased to hum.

For a battle had been fought there over the paper Rhizos had prepared and forced the Greek householders—his father among them—to sign. This was a document disowning Rhizos and his followers as 'young hotheads' whom the elders of the community were unable to restrain. Little Perfume, it declared, entirely dissociated itself from them.

'I will not sign it,' swore Londos, in bed with rheumatism, and groaning as he stirred indignantly. But, like all the others, sign

he did at last, and held Rhizos's hand, peering up into his face. 'If only I could come with you!'

'You'll be less bored in bed, *papakas*,' Rhizos assured him lightly. 'Probably we'll all catch damnable colds. But our bluff will keep them off for a time—and they can only give a few of us a week or so in prison when it's over.'

But midnight saw a barricade, business-like enough and breast-high, spanning the sharia from side to side. Then, leaving the Latas, armed with cudgels, to look after it, Rhizos and his companions went back and slept in Little Perfume, a sleep that was broken in early dawn by one of the Latas coming panting to the door of the Trikoupis house with the news that Falih's lawyer was approaching with his gang of labourers. Evidently he expected to take the settlement by surprise.

Rhizos dressed hurriedly and went to the barricade. With the lawyer he saw two Egyptian policemen.

The party was evidently staggered at sight of the barricade. What happened then is not quite clear. For a little, while his young men ran up, Rhizos stood and parleyed with the lawyer, the gendarmes at first laughing and then losing their tempers in the quick, Egyptian way. One of them unslung his carbine—it was in the days when they still carried carbines—and, levelling it at Rhizos, ordered him to start demolishing the barricade. For answer Kolocrotoni, looking over the barricade, at some distance from Rhizos, called out:

'Drop that carbine!'

The gendarme looked up and found himself covered by a dozen revolvers. His carbine clattered to the ground. At the order of Kolocrotoni the other policeman also disarmed. Sina climbed over the barricade, and, in the midst of a queer silence, went and collected the weapons. Then he returned and the two parties looked at each other undecidedly. Suddenly the first gendarme turned round and hastened down the Sharia el Ghorair. His companion trudged stolidly after him. Falih's lawyer, after a moment of hesitation, followed suit, his gang behind him in straggling retreat. The young Greeks at the barricade avoided each others' eyes and beat their hands together in the chill morning air. Somewhere a cock began to crow, shrilly.

At ten o'clock a policeman came down the sharia, surveyed the barricade and its defenders, and then retired. Kolocrotoni brought Rhizos a cup of coffee, and while the latter drank it, him-



self mounted to the highest point of the defences and watched. Suddenly he drew a breath like a long sigh.

'Here they come.'

## XVI.

How far those thirteen young Greeks had imagined the affair would go it is impossible to say. In the subsequent inquiry the police affirmed that the Greeks fired the first shot. There can, at least, be little doubt that the police at the beginning made no attempt to shoot. The squad of twenty men marched to within ten yards or so of the barricade, and Rhizos called them to halt. For answer the officer in command ostentatiously turned his back on the barricade, ordered his men to club their carbines and charge, himself turned round again—and came forward at a rapid run, swinging a loaded stick in his hand.

The attackers were greeted with a hail of stones. Carbine and revolver shots rang out. The officer pitched forward into the dust, and for a moment the policemen wavered. But only for a moment. They came on again. And then Rhizos committed himself openly. He leant over the barricade and shot three of them in rapid succession. Thereat the survivors broke and ran. The Greeks did not fire, but glanced, white-faced, at their leader. Rhizos, white himself, calmly ejected the spent rounds from his revolver, and re-loaded it.

Then, with a glance down the empty sharia, he climbed the barricade and inspected the four uniformed figures lying in the dust. The officer and one other were dead. Two of them lived, one with a broken arm, the other with his skull slightly grazed. Rhizos bandaged the last one, helped the man with the wounded arm to his feet, and pointed down the sharia. Holding to the wall, like a sick dog, the policeman shambled out of sight. Rhizos was turning in perplexity to the other bodies when his companions called to him urgently. . . . He gained shelter just as the rifle-fire opened.

None of the defenders had any experience of warfare, and it says much for the skill with which the barricade was constructed that in the first few minutes only two of them were killed. Kolo-crotoni was shot through the shoulder. Rhizos, calling to the others to keep their places, crawled to him and bandaged him. Presently the rifle-fire ceased for a moment, but after another abortive charge opened again. . . .

By evening there were eight Greeks, including Rhizos, left alive. In spite of threats and entreaties on the part of those who held the barricade, non-combatants—the gentle Elia among them—crawled out from Little Perfume and took away the bodies of the dead. But with the evening the gendarmes withdrew (in futile search of a way over the khan walls, as was afterwards told), the stretch of street in front of the barricade was left deserted, and, staring at each other unbelievably, the young men ate the food brought them from Little Perfume.

It was dreadful in those evening hours. Rhizos had two bonfires lighted at a distance of fifty yards or so down the sharia, so that there might be no surprise attack. A tarpaulin had been brought from the settlement and erected behind the barricade in the form of a hut, and what dark thoughts assailed the outlaws till they dropped exhausted in its shelter no one will ever know. But long after midnight some of them awoke and heard Rhizos, alone wakeful and guarding the barricade, singing in a strange, shrill voice snatches of a song they had never heard before. It was a frightening thing to hear in the listening silence of the sharia, and Kolocrotoni prevailed on him to go and lie down. Utterly weary, he swayed to the shelter, staggered—and was asleep before Kolocrotoni's arm caught him and lowered him to the ground.

Near three in the morning, eluding somehow the police-picket at the upper end of the Sharia Ghoraib, Zara Muslih reached the barricade and whispered the news to Kolocrotoni: the Bill was to be signed and issued in the morning. The story of the affray in the Warrens had hastened the signing.

'And you must all get away at once,' she urged. 'Throw up rope-ladders over the khan walls.'

Kolocrotoni shook his head. 'We cannot leave here until the Bill is definitely signed, Rhizos says. If we abandon the barricade now the police may be in possession of Little Perfume before morning.'

'Rhizos—he doesn't know what he's done! You people were in a searchlight of sympathy before he started this resistance—no one has a scrap of pity for you now. . . . Oh, tell him I *must* see him!'

The young Greek shook his head again, looking at her with narrowed eyes. 'He's asleep. This isn't a woman's business.'

A moment they looked at each other, Kolocrotoni implacable, Zara desperately pleading. Then she glanced at that tragic barri-

cade for the last time, and went back through the dying light of the bonfires and never saw either Rhizos or Kolocrotoni again.

For at starset, in the lowering darkness that precedes the Egyptian morning, they shook Rhizos awake. The police were approaching again, and in considerable force. He started up as he felt their hands on his shoulder, and looked at them, Kolocrotoni and the younger Latas, remotely, alertly.

*'What is it? The Persians?'*

They stared at him, stumblingly attempting to follow strange rhythms and accentuations in his speech. *'It's the gendarmes,'* said Kolocrotoni. *'And we'll hardly be able to make them out. There's not a gleam of sun yet.'*

Rhizos laughed, jumping to his feet, speaking again in words they barely understood—albeit they might have been direct answer to Zara's passionate denunciation. . . . Then he shuddered and passed his hands across his eyes, as though awakening from an inner sleep.

*'What is it? What have I been saying? I had a dream. . . . The gendarmes?'*

Far down the sharia came the steady tramp of disciplined feet.

#### XVII.

They sent an armoured car against it eventually, that flimsy erection behind which a dwindling band of Greeks defied the hosts of the Orient. It crashed through, indifferently, half an hour after the promulgation of the Bill, and it was then that Rhizos and Kolocrotoni were killed. Three of the defenders, Sina and the two Latas, escaped back into Little Perfume, their ammunition exhausted. There they managed to scale the khan walls and were seen never again in Cairo. But before they went they told the tale of those last few hours. . . .

The historian pauses, his theme in diminuendo, himself standing in the bright Cairene sunshine, lost in fantastic speculation as he sees again that misascribed quotation graved below the word ΘΕΡΜΟΠΥΛΑΙ on the dusty wall of the Sharia el Ghorab:

*'So much the better. We shall fight in the shade.'*

—RHIZOS OF SPARTA.'

## MONKEYS.

BY JAMES W. BEST, O.B.E.

JUDGED by modern standards of beauty, the Indian monkey cannot be called good looking, yet it can fairly claim that its face is its fortune. Indeed, its similarity to human beings in form and features (and alas, some habits too) probably accounts for the prominent part that the monkey plays in Hindu mythology.

In India, therefore, monkeys are sacred, and like so many sacred things, sometimes a nuisance; especially when they become licensed marauders. Boys, of course, think differently; they enjoy the monkeys. Even the writer pleads guilty to keeping a catapult ready for such occasions when monkeys in trees above his tent have been too much of a good thing.

Although the idea of killing a monkey is horrible beyond contemplation, there are occasions when it has to be done. Dogs sometimes catch one and fail to finish it off. The merciful man, who has to complete their work, finds it difficult to forget those dark pleading eyes that gaze into his face as he puts the poor creature out of its misery. Boys, however, are heartless creatures, good for monkeys. If it were not for them, their long-tailed cousins would grow fat and lazy on the village crops. Likewise if there were no monkeys to keep the human young occupied, there can be little doubt that small boys owning slings and bows would be up to other devilry which would more seriously inconvenience their elders. Let them play with the monkeys then, who enjoy the sport as much as the boys do. It is very amusing to watch them making faces at the boys and otherwise stir them up to action, then dodge their missiles with artfulness and agile ease. They know the limitations of the boys as well as their own, and both sides get healthy recreation by teasing one another between meals.

There is a book written by a retired Indian administrator dedicated to the Simla monkeys. A happy dedication—which shows that at least one of India's guests appreciates these frolicsome creatures and renders thanks for the entertainment which they have given him.

In captivity a monkey is an abominable creature, prone to imitate man's worst side. In the jungle, which of course is its real home,

it is a useful animal that warns man and beasts of the movements of dangerous prowling enemies.

This story concerns some of the long-tailed fraternity which, harassed beyond endurance by the forest leopards, came to the cultivated plains for sanctuary, and grew fat on the crops of Pipalgaon village.

In many ways this was an ordinary Indian village, set down in the cultivated plains a few miles away from the jungle. Close around and nestling against it were numerous cool gardens of mangoes, custard apples, oranges, lemons, chillies, onions and all those many other delicacies which the Indian loves to grow and eat. Here during the greater part of the day throughout the dry season many pairs of bullocks walked slowly backwards up ramparts leading to the lips of wells into which huge leather bags were slowly being lowered and filled with water, then with the return journey of the pairs of bullocks down the ramps the water would be drawn up and tipped from the bags into masonry tanks with a roar and rush, while the bullocks panted and heaved, and yokes and pulleys creaked in the still garden air. The steady flow of water down the little channels from the reservoirs trickled with the musical sound that running water always has and finally vanished into the cracks of the parched earth around the shady plants. The outer ring of green gardens spread itself among the red-tiled houses of the village, like ivy creeping among rocks. In the centre of the village, high over the lesser foliage of the gardens and the closely packed roofs, the millions of the newly burst leaves in the sacred pipal-tree shivered and shook in the breeze.

Such was the peaceful scene which would present itself to a stranger. Yet this garden city covered as much envy, hatred and malice as an English political meeting: where the supporters of one party are trying to persuade patriots to vote against the other by saying that their opponents, if returned, will certainly deprive the people of their rights.

Hindus formed the majority of the population in those two hundred pink houses. Many were of the higher priestly caste, led by one Sitaram. A group of white pineapple-shape temples showed over the pink and green of the surrounding scenery, where in the mornings and evenings the jingle of bells and the booming of gongs and the smell of incense led the pious Hindus to prayer and sacrifice. Scarlet-daubed images of gods sat half-hidden in the dark recesses of the buildings.

The opposing faction of Mohammedans, led by a grey-bearded veteran named Karim, worshipped in a dignified mosque. They sternly disapproved of the music and other frivolities forbidden the faithful, but practised by the Hindus in their temples. Although the Prophet forbade the Hindu noise called music, yet there was nothing to prevent the good Karim calling true believers to prayer at dawn in a perfect tenor voice which carried clearly for a long distance over the gardens and roofs of the village. The followers of the Prophet were early risers, their call to prayer rousing the faithful to devotions long before the infidels were astir.

Such was usually the case, until one morning Sitaram, waking earlier than usual, heard the long wavering, tenor notes of Karim calling from the mosque in the still morning air.

He was jealous.

A special effort was requested from his Hindu followers ; with the result that for the next week Karim's call (of which he was justly proud) was drowned by the sound of idolatrous music. That started real trouble. Protests were made, to no avail. Exasperated, the Mohammedans proclaimed that they intended at the forthcoming feast of Bakar Id to offer up a cow for sacrifice. The Hindus were horrified at the idea. To show their protest, they marched to and fro past the mosque with drums and music whenever the Mohammedans tried to hold a service and to read the sacred Koran. Exactly what started the open violence none knew or would say. Brass-bound quarter-staves are useful weapons and both sides made use of them. A few men were killed, more were injured, and it took some time to rebuild the burnt houses. Later, a Magistrate's enquiry was held at which much hard swearing was recorded. The net result was that punitive police were posted in the village until the villagers discovered that it was cheaper to keep tempers than truculent policemen.

At this juncture a large troop of forest monkeys arrived at the conclusion that the tyranny of the local leopards was becoming unbearable. Their jungle home had been closed by the forest department to the felling of any wood or bamboos, and in addition graziers were not permitted to take their cattle there. So the forests were undisturbed by man. A fact that the monkeys did not appreciate so much as the leopards, who normally kept to the dark hours for their prowling, but now, with no fear of disturbance, raided the unhappy monkeys by day as well. No ape felt safe. Their nerves were thoroughly shattered. Trees were no sanctuary

from the spotted devils, but the ground was more dangerous still ; and there of course the best titbits lay temptingly exposed to their hungry eyes. The ripest fruit falls to the ground, and that the monkey knows. Neither was the ground safe for foraging by day, nor the trees for sleep by night. The leopards might be anywhere and lurked everywhere. They stalked monkeys till they were tired of the amusement, then full-bellied, climbed the trees where their victims would later come to rest.

The monkeys fed disturbed by thoughts of leopard, not caring to pick and choose the choicest fruits, but snatching hastily whatever came first to hand, and glancing with quick nervous jerks of grey heads as they looked for the lurking foe. Water had to be approached after preliminary reconnaissance, not with the slow thoughtful steps of the grey ape, but in quick rushes with nervous glances at the covert behind. Digestions suffering under these harassing conditions, nightmares of black leopards added imaginary terrors to the very real teeth and claws which they knew might be in them at any moment of their slumbers.

Driven from the forests, they migrated to Pipalgaon soon after the punitive police had vacated the village : there they found peace and plenty. At first their presence was tolerated by the village elders and welcomed with joy by small boys. Later the ripening crops began to suffer and the villagers found that monkeys were as great a nuisance as policemen. What with flying foxes and pigs by night, and monkeys by day, they saw their cherished crops vanishing as quickly as they ripened. No boys could cope with so many monkeys, who looked upon the youngsters as a means of recreation and raising of healthy appetites between meals.

Now the pious Mohammedans of Pipalgaon, though of more sturdy build than their fellow-villagers, were a minority against the Hindus. Both sides, remembering the police, were careful to do nothing to provoke another outbreak of violence. But the Hindus with devilish cunning, went as far as they dared in making the Mohammedans' life a burden to them. So the good Moslems took counsel together one evening after prayers. Old grey-bearded Karim had watched the monkeys as they rested in a tamarind-tree in the middle of the day and had a brain-wave, or, as he put it to his fellows, ' God in His wisdom had shown him a way to confound the idolatrous infidels.'

Actually, there can be little doubt that Satan had as much to do with the idea as anyone. Though the grey-beard's explanation



was preferable to the truth. It adds zest to a bit of devilry if a man can convince himself that the Almighty is behind the business with a blessing, and if he can shift the responsibility for his acts to Him, he can work up a proper enthusiasm for the enterprise.

Many of the worst examples of human cruelty recorded in History have been perpetrated in the name of religion.

After the council of the faithful had broken up and when nightfall had closed over the village, Karim crept out of his house along the street with a bag full of peas over his shoulder. The air was still and the only sounds that disturbed the night were the cries of the cultivators as they drove the pigs off their crops. Some of the villagers were sleeping in the middle of the road in the front of their houses to take full advantage of the cool night air. No dogs disturbed the old man, why should they? They knew him well.

As Karim passed slowly up the street he paused in front of each Hindu house, throwing handfuls of peas on to the roof. The grains trickled quietly down the tiles, some reaching the ground, others lodging in the chinks of the roofing. Sitaram, the leading Hindu, snored on his bed in the middle of the street covered with a blanket. Very gently some peas were dropped on him, some left visible between the folds of his blanket, others quietly tucked beneath. Sitaram slept on. As Karim left his hated neighbour he cast trails of peas leading from every direction to the unconscious Hindu.

Then he went home and said his prayers to Allah and slept soundly as pious men do.

That worthy Brahmin, Sitaram, also enjoyed a refreshing sleep, but woke early. Feeling little hands plucking at his blanket, he thought that his children had come to wake him, so he chid them and turned over on his other side for further repose. Suddenly he started up with a cry of rage. His blanket had been rudely pulled off, leaving his sacred person exposed to the view of cow-eating Mohammedans, who stood around laughing. Jumping to his feet he saw monkeys running in every direction, one of them dragging his blanket behind it. Gaining the shelter of his house Sitaram raged at the insult, much puzzled at what had happened.

The monkeys, having decided that peas were good, were looking for more. Soon they were swarming over the roofs of the houses picking up the dainties that lodged behind the tiles, pushing little dark hands beneath them and finally tearing the tiles out in their search for food.

'Truly God is great!' chuckled Karim, as he watched the destruction.

While Sitaram was still nursing his grievances, deploring his lost blanket, he heard the sacred monkeys scampering over the tiles above his head. This was nothing unusual, and being an orthodox Hindu, he showed a saintly forbearance towards the creatures beloved of the gods. But it was unusual for the monkeys to pull the tiles off the roof of his house. Tile after tile was pulled up and cast aside to roll and slide with scraping and clattering noises to the edge of the roof, finally to break into fragments as it hit the hard ground below. Rushing out, Sitaram cursed the creatures, to find many other houses plagued in the same way. The monkeys retreated to the next house, where they sat on the ridge with knees doubled up, while their little black faces peered nervously from side to side. As Sitaram went back into his house, first one monkey, then another, walked slowly along the ridge of the roof, paused to look around, then with a squeak of joy returned to Sitaram's roof, sending the tiles flying again to earth.

Each time that Sitaram ran out the monkeys fled, only to return as soon as he vanished indoors. In other parts of the village much the same thing was going on, but, strange to say, only the houses of Hindus were pestered. A fact which led to much discussion. The Hindus were puzzled as to the reason why animals which they held to be sacred should molest only those who venerate them. The Mohammedans explained the discrimination by emphasising the fact that God is great and that Mohammed is truly his Prophet. A few stray peas that found their way between the tiles on to the floors of their houses made the Hindus suspicious. Relations between the two factions in the village were again seriously strained. The monkeys were enjoying themselves hugely. Word went round the monkey world that profitable fun was to be had in Pipalgaon village, where soon every monkey in India seemed to have collected.

At the moment when angry words might soon be followed by blows, attention was diverted to Lieutenant Gerald Anthony, of the — Horse, who arrived on the scene alone, having outstripped his slow bullock transport. The villagers knew and welcomed the genial 'Tony Sahib' as a man who liked 'passing the time of day' with his fellows and was always ready to kill marauding pigs. He was a typical cavalryman, lean, hard and straight. At the moment, after a long march over dusty roads, he did not look his best in his khaki shirt and shorts and with a week's growth of beard upon his

face. He was astonished at the large number of monkeys that he saw round the village. They sat on their hunkers on the rice bunds between the fields: some were huddled up on the feathery branches of the babul-trees, others ran along mud walls or scratched for fleas on the house-tops. A party in a group of large dark mango-trees seemed to be enjoying some huge joke as they jumped from branch to branch shaking the leaves which hissed and crackled with their movements. They shook the whole tree as they hooted and boomed at their jest. Seeing the subaltern's terrier, they ceased their pranks for the more serious business of baiting and abusing the strange dog. The latter had come to the end of a long hot march, and having at the moment no use for monkeys, passed on with his master into the village.

Finding a raised platform or *chabutra* beneath the shady pipal-tree, 'Tony' sat down feeling refreshment in the hissing and patter of the leaves overhead, like gently falling rain.

One after the other, the villagers ceased their wrangling and gathered round to see him and his dog. First some children, naked as they were born, but probably more dirty, stood eyeing him. Sahibs were strange creatures, often mad, but generally harmless and sometimes amusing. Then the headman turned up, and the village watchman. With the courtesy of the East they offered him a chair and brought him milk. Sitaram came forward with a present of a few oranges freshly rescued from the monkeys in his garden, and still warm from the ripening sun. Not to be outdone in courtesy, Karim produced a gift of tomatoes. So they all sat together in the flickering shade of the pipal-tree while the children formed a wondering but silent circle around.

In this way was brought about the nearest approach to civil speaking terms that the grey-bearded Mohammedan and the high-caste Hindu had been on for many days. Courtesy forbade wrangling before a guest, so conversation was conducted along neutral lines and mostly through the medium of the Sahib. But the Sahib, with soldierly promptitude, plunged straight into their troubles.

'I saw many monkeys as I came into the village,' he said.

For a moment there was an awkward silence. Then each party broke out with its grievance. The subaltern, whose precise Hindustani differed from the local dialect, failed to follow exactly what either side said, but saw clearly that each had some grievance connected with the monkeys. Allah and His prophet Mohammed

seemed to have something to do with it as well as strange Hindu gods of whom the subaltern had as yet only vaguely heard.

After much cross-examination and interruption, he gathered that all parties concerned would like to be rid of the monkeys. The Mohammedans said that if they could have their way they would shoot one or two, but they could not do so for fear of offending the Hindus. The latter were aghast at the idea of such sacrilege, so the clamour broke out afresh.

It was clear to 'Tony' that the monkeys were there, that unless something could be done there would soon be no crops left, but that the Hindus would permit no harm to the monkeys.

'Listen,' said 'Tony.' 'Here come my carts with tent and baggage. Help my servants to pitch the tent, then let me eat and sleep. Come again in two hours' time and I will see what I can do to help you. Meanwhile let no sound of wrangling disturb me.'

Willing hands soon had the tent run up. Then after a hearty breakfast 'Tony,' with feet up on a long chair while he nursed a gurgling pipe, took careful stock of the situation. Clearly there was trouble in the village, somehow connected with the monkeys. His servant, who was no less a gossip than others, soon found out what the trouble was and informed his master.

'Tony' chuckled.

Feeling sleepy, with half-closed eyes looking vaguely through the open door of his tent, he suddenly woke. Seeing the skin of his recently slain leopard drying in the sun, a certain wild notion came to his brain. A ridiculous notion, but the thing was possible. Loudly he called for his servant.

'Let the village elders be summoned again in audience,' he said.

They soon came back full of hope.

'Catch me a monkey alive,' he said, 'and bring it here. No. I will not kill it. Bring me the monkey unharmed and I will drive all the monkeys away.'

The village elders went away again, and for once united, took counsel together, sending for a much despised low-caste trapper of unclean pigs and jackals. This man had his sordid dwelling outside the village away from respectable householders. He approached humbly leaning on the shaft of a heavy spear and followed by a mangy cur dog. Hindus and Moslems alike shrank from his presence, but made an effort at geniality because his skilled services were needed, no one else having the faintest idea of how to catch a

monkey alive. The three leading men in the conference were strangely different. The grey-bearded Mohammedan clothed in serviceable tunic and breeches, the clean shaven Hindu with caste mark painted across his forehead and dressed in flowing cotton clothes spotlessly clean: and the village outcast barely covered with rags, much dirt and a sheepish grin upon his face.

The monkeys took their midday rest in the branches of the dark mango-trees and in the thin foliage of the *babuls* where their grey forms could be seen huddled up in sleep and their tails hanging down straight as plumb-lines. For a while the pitching of the white tent interested them until the Sahib and his servants were asleep, whilst the sun was topping the highest point in its journey over the pass through the skies.

Towards evening men and monkeys woke with thoughts of food—specially the monkeys. One of the villagers particularly interested them, he was busy laying a large net upon the ground and bending mysterious bamboos towards it. Later he unrolled a long line of string away from the net, the further end of which he left behind a bush at a place some distance off. Going back to the net the man threw a lot of peas to the ground near it, and, walking towards the tree in which the monkeys were resting, he dropped a trail of peas. Then he retired behind the bush. The man interested them. What on earth was he doing? This required investigation. The peas were suspicious. They remembered how a Sahib had once spread bread-pills in their sight which they ate and soon after were very sick, thus learning the inner secrets of ipecacuanha. They did not mean to be caught out with that trick again. First one, then others dropped to the ground to investigate the peas beneath the tree. This was no made-up stuff: hard peas—and good peas too. An aged grey ape picked one up, looked at it, smelt it, and bit. Watching his fellows, he ate it: then convinced that it was good and safe, he looked for more before his companions could find them. Soon a line of monkeys was stretched towards the net.

A youngish one arrived there first, who, seeing the peas scattered in a tempting group, hopped into the middle of them and sat down to eat at his leisure. Suddenly a string was pulled, and before the monkey could jump clear, the net flicked over, pinning little Willie tightly to the ground; where he bit and cursed while his fellows made a wild dash for the safety of the trees. The net held tight. The monkeys, huddled in the trees, watched developments with anxiety. They had not long to wait. The ragged outcast ran up

to his trap with a stout bag and without ceremony bundled Willie into it. There he cursed and scratched without avail.

Soon the village elders craved audience of the Sahib, while the monkeys hopped nearer over the trees and the roofs of the houses towards the tent to see what dreadful fate Willie's was to be. They saw the bag carried in : then a messenger went out and brought back the village cobbler.

They could not see what was happening inside the tent. Here a freshly killed leopard's skin—a mangy creature too—was produced and carefully sewn over the captive monkey's body. The poor creature shivered in fear, watching the door with wild black eyes. Oh ! for the joy of freedom and rejoining his fellows ! Never before had he realised what freedom meant. Anxiously the free monkeys watched the door of the tent, where a large crowd of villagers was now collected evidently much amused at what was going on inside. Would Willie be released ? Surely even a Sahib, no matter how mad, would not dare to hurt a sacred monkey ?

'That will do,' said 'Tony,' 'let him go.'

The bag was opened, Willie shot out into the blinding sun, blinked for a couple of seconds, then made a wild dash for his friends whom he saw sitting in the trees around. What a tale he would tell them once he got away from those beastly men ! He looked forward to a great welcome.

The waiting monkeys saw the crowd part, and heard a great shout of laughter. Looking for the cause of the unusual merriment, they saw bounding from the tent—not little Willie—but, their arch-enemy—leopard. Worse still, it came straight towards them clearly meaning mischief.

'Leopard !' They gasped in one voice.

Mothers snatched up babies and hurried to the tops of the trees. There was no time for backward glances, every monkey made for the highest branches in the tree. Then, because they could go no farther, they looked down and back.

As Willie, unrecognisable in his royal robe, and longing for the company of his friends, sprang up the tree, they realised that he was following them and they crashed down through the branches, reaching the ground with resounding thumps. The leopard followed from one tree to another. Never was there so persistent a beast, and never, thought Willie, had his friends treated him like this before. The faster he ran the more his friends tried to escape him. Over trees, through rocky nalas, across the fields, leaving

the plundered gardens far behind them, they viewed the distant blue of the jungle-clad hills. They ran as they had never run before, and for all we know, are running still.

They vanished from the village, and this is certain; that particular troop of monkeys never returned.

The whole village, convulsed with laughter, had watched the dispersal of the raiders. The grey-bearded Mohammedan could be seen with tears trickling down his face and leaning against the same post as an almost paralysed Sitaram. Caste and religion were forgotten.

Truly God is great.

Incapacitated by hiccoughs, Lieutenant Gerald Anthony of — Horse saw the last of his leopard-skin blending in the distance with the grey of a panic-stricken troop of fleeing monkeys. A trophy lost! Many men would make bigger sacrifices for less laughter.

It is pleasant to conclude this story with the hackneyed ending that 'they all lived happily together ever after.'



SCOTLAND IN 1815: WHAT THE BAGMAN SAW.

ONE evening in the summer of 1815 a gentleman in commercial employment in the City of London took his place as an inside passenger in the York coach. His name, unfortunately, I cannot tell you, for in the amusing little book <sup>1</sup> that he published two years later about his experiences on the journey he was now beginning he chose to remain anonymous. Of his antecedents just a little can be gathered from internal evidence. He was young, yet not so young as might be inferred from the fact that he had never travelled far out of London before and that this was his first experience of 'the road.' He was young enough to have the most exquisitely correct feelings about scenery and ruins and to admire Gothic at the expense of classical architecture, but old enough to be a sound business man and an astute and well-informed commentator on men and affairs. At one point in his book he has occasion to show a good working knowledge of the Latin poets, but even without that the grace and perspicuity of his writing would have indicated a man of superior education. He was well bred too, for he was able, without making a sour face, to take his fellow-bagmen as he found them, which was not much in the way of polite learning, either classical or modern. His politics were Whig with Liberal tendencies but no taint of Radicalism. His business took him first to the North of England, but that was only a tedious preliminary to the prospect that engaged all his thought. He was actually going to Scotland, a part of the United Kingdom that had lately begun to be cried up as 'romantic'—whatever that may mean. Having read the justly admired narrative poems of Mr. Walter Scott, he carried, in addition to his samples, a heavy cargo of 'sensibility' to be discharged at discretion after crossing the Border. Still, he was a business man, and romantic anticipations could not exclude certain sordid anxieties. For example: Were the inhabitants of Scotland as romantic as their scenery, and, if so, how did their native romanticism work out in terms of pounds, shillings and pence and the giving of orders? In due course he found out, and,

<sup>1</sup> *Letters by an English Commercial Traveller written during a Journey in Scotland in the Summer of 1815* (London, Longman, 1817).

everything considered, he bore the shock well. But of that more presently.

Our traveller—for convenience' sake let us call him Mr. Smith—struck lucky in a sense at the outset. He was one of four inside passengers. At first each of his three travelling companions exhibited the secular loathing that every self-respecting Briton feels towards anybody who dares to share a public vehicle with him, wrapped themselves in their shawls, etc., and went to sleep. But after this display of what Mr. Smith in his innocence supposed to be typical Englishness, morning and breakfast revealed his fellow-travellers in their true colours of triple-dyed Scots, each with a thesis to propound and defend.

'One of them had all that undisguised partiality for his own country, and illiberal or affected contempt for every other, which render Scotsmen in general so unamiable—so offensive to their southern neighbours; another, on the contrary, affected an immense admiration for the English character, which he endeavoured to exalt at the expense of that of his own countrymen; while the third, like your whimsically contradictory favorite Lesmahago, differed from both, abusing the character and institutions of both countries indifferently, yet strenuously defending them, on either side, when attacked by his countrymen.'

For this contradictory third man, who is styled B. in the narrative, our Mr. Smith at once took a strong liking, which seems to have been reciprocated, so much so, indeed, that Mr. B. constituted himself Mr. Smith's guide, philosopher and friend throughout the Scottish tour. Sometimes Mr. Smith could not help pulling his contentious friend's leg. An early opportunity occurred when, after some curious experiences in Yorkshire and Lancashire, they pushed on to Edinburgh together. At Rokeby some distant whiff of native air reached his nostrils, which so intoxicated him that, to the great astonishment of Mr. Smith, who had heard him express very different opinions, he broke into a harangue about the magnificence and frightfulness of Scottish valour as exemplified in the campaigns of Agricola and the Plantagenets. Mr. Smith was moved to protest.

'I could not help retorting that I thought the Scots were sensible of a lack of public virtue in modern times when they were forced to recur for instances of patriotism to the Roman invasion, or the days of our Edwards: that the feeling of independence did not appear to have actuated the Scots at the time of the Union,

when they trucked their own government for a pitiful share of ours ; or rather for no share at all, for their representative system was a contemptible mockery, since the members for the country were nominated by a few great families, and the rest of their forty-and-five were sent from wretched Burghs by a self-elected magistracy : that as might have been expected from so miserable a representation, the Scottish members appeared totally devoid of patriotism ; and that in all questions they might invariably be seen ranging themselves on the side of the powers that be : that they had not even the common virtue of nationality in their public actions ; but calmly submitted to measures obviously against the interests of Scotland . . . I knew these to be exactly the sentiments of my friend ; but the spirit of contradiction was roused in him ; and he argued against his conviction till I was tired and he was hoarse.'

Mr. Smith's first reflection when he crossed the Border was that he was now in the land of Burns. It happened that the reputation of the Bard was the one subject that the dialectic B. held sacred. Not even for the sake of argument would he impugn it. His enthusiasm infected Mr. Smith, who borrowed his pocket volume of Burns and set himself to master the Scots vernacular. He seems to have succeeded uncommonly well, for in the anecdotage of his tour he shows a command of the Doric such as few Englishmen, even after prolonged residence in Scotland, ever attain. None the less, he likes Burns best when he writes in standard English—that is, he agrees fully with the polite Edinburgh critics of Burns's own day.

'The humorous compositions of the Scottish bard I cannot relish ; for, although I understand almost every word, I do not see the aptness of their application. I have, however, been much gratified with his graver poetry. It would seem that Burns felt the difficulty of conveying refined sentiments in the vulgar dialect ; for, in proportion as his subject is elevated, his language approaches to pure English. In the "Cotter's Saturday Night," which is a beautiful picture of the simple but dignified manners of the Scottish peasantry, the Scottish words are few ; and, like the obsolete words in Shenstone's "Schoolmistress," add to the simplicity of the verse without lowering or debasing it.'

At Coldstream Mr. Smith had his first experience of Scottish hospitality, being entertained there by a friend of B.'s. He was favourably impressed. 'He had some of his neighbours to dinner, respectable men, and possessing a frankness of manner and sociality of disposition which I did not expect on this side of the Tweed.'

But rather ungraciously he adds : ' I suspect they owe these amiable qualities to their proximity to, and consequent intercourse with, the English.' He was confirmed in his suspicion when he reached Edinburgh and started business operations. He found his prospective customers dilatory, furtive and bumptious :

' The Scots are not easy in conversation. They are more anxious to shine than to please. Every one wishes to be thought wise, and you shall often see a stupid fellow entrench himself in gravity and preserve a profound silence, from the selfish fear of exposing his ignorance, or risking the little share of reputation he may possess. But see this man in another company where he is surrounded by those more stupid than himself ; he shines away and engrosses the whole conversation. His hearers hate him for his superiority ; yet they are contented he should shine, rather than they should run the risk of discomfiture by opposing him. In all companies, where there is an obvious diversity of talent, is to be observed this submission of inferior to superior ability ; and when persons are thrown together, their discourse is rather disputation.'

Hard words, but as true to-day as they were a hundred years ago. The honest Scot who reads them will not be indignant. He will wince and pass on, but only to receive further castigation.

' An excessive frigidity is the consequence of the want of the frankness, which with us is the heart and soul of social enjoyment. A cautious reserve appears to pervade the breast of every Scotsman ; he answers a question as if he were undergoing a cross-examination ; the mysterious habit grows upon him, till he makes a secret of things which would do him no manner of harm although all the world knew them. That which makes him unamiable in society, makes him ridiculous in business ; so much is the Scot afraid of getting himself into a *scrape*, that he would allow his friend to risk his money with a rogue not worth a farthing, when a word might have put him on his guard ; but that word, *if reported* to the person of whom it was said, might occasion *trouble* to him who said it. . . . When an Englishman is asked his opinion of another's character and stability, he answers at once, " he is a scoundrel," " he is honest, but very poor, don't trust him." The Scotsman's answer, on a similar occasion, would be, " he is a discreet man," or " he is a decent man." These phrases at first deceived me, but I have learned from experience that the discreet man may be a great rogue, and that the decent man may be incapacitated for business either by laziness or poverty.

'I asked a gentleman to favour me with the names of those with whom he thought I might do business. He took me into his private office, and, after having shut the door, he said he would, to oblige me, as I was a friend of Mr. S.'s, give me the names of the good people in the place; "but," added he, "I must request that you do not give the same information to anyone else, for although your trade does not interfere with mine, the information might reach some one whose business *does* interfere with mine: besides, in furnishing a list of *good* people, it may be presumed that I consider all those who are excluded from that list as *bad*, which deduction might be the cause of bringing me into some *trouble*.'"

After that Mr. Smith was not surprised but only amused by the reply of the highly respectable tradesman of whom, in all innocence, he inquired what might be the rent of his handsome premises. The reply was, 'Far ower muckle'—only that and nothing more. As a bit of by-play it was all very well, but when the same spirit invaded and pervaded actual business dealings, Mr. Smith was peeved, yet never so peevish as to lose his sense of humour in reminiscence. For example, there is his story of the Really Promising Customer, which being one of the best Scotch stories ever recorded, deserves to be quoted in full in spite of its length. The Really Promising Customer had dealt with Mr. Smith's firm before, but had not yet settled his account. Mr. Smith called on him to collect the money due and solicit a continuance of his favours.

'I call and inform him who I am, and request him to fix a time for the transaction of our business; he bids me call again, which I do several times, without doing anything. He wishes to be the last I do with, but *all* cannot be *last*, and all have wished to be so. After a few days I get him to proceed to business. He objects to the price of the articles I offer, and says he will not buy. I try to induce him, but says he, "You are over dear, sir, I can buy the same goods ten per cent lower; if ye like to take off ten per cent I'll take some of these." I tell him that a reduction of the price is out of the question, and put my sample of the article aside; but the Scotsman wants it, "Well, sir, it is a *terrible* price; but, as I am out of it at present, I'll take just a little, till I can be supplied cheaper, but ye must take off five per cent." "Sir," say I, "would you not think me an unconscionable knave, to ask ten, or even five per cent more than I intend to take?" He laughs at me, "Hoot, hoot, man! do ye ay expect to get what ye ask? Gude lord! an I was ay to get what I ask I would soon be rich. Come, come, I'll give ye within twa an' a half of your ain price, and gude faith,

man ! ye'll be well paid." I tell him that I never make any deduction from the price I first demand, and that an adherence to the rule saves much trouble to both parties. "Well, well," says he, "since you must have it all your own way, I must e'en take the article, but really I think you are over keen." So much for buying and selling ; then comes the settlement of the account. "How much discount do ye take off, sir ?" "Discount ! why, sir, you cannot expect discount after the account has stood a twelvemonth." "Indeed, but I do expect discount, pay siller without discount ! na, na, sir, that's no the way here, we never pay money without discount, ye must deduct five per cent." I tell him that I will take off no discount at all. "Weel, sir, I'll gie you no money at all." Rather than go without a settlement, I at last agree to take off two and a half per cent from the amount, which is accordingly deducted. "I have ten shillings down against you for short measure, and fifteen shillings for damages." "Indeed ! these are heavy deductions, but if you say that you shall lose to that amount, I suppose I must allow it." "Oh aye, it's all right. Then, sir, here's eight and fourpence for pack-sheet, and thirteen shillings for carriage and postage." These last items astonish me. "What, sir," say I, "are we to pay all the charges of your business ?" But I find that if I do not allow these to be taken off he will not pay his account, so I acquiesce, resolving within myself, that since these unfair deductions are made at settlement, it would be quite fair in our next transaction to charge an additional price to cover the extortion.

'I now congratulate myself on having concluded my business with the man, but I am disappointed. "Have ye a stamp ?" asks he. "A stamp ! for what ?" "Just to draw you a bill," replies he. "A bill, my good sir ! I took off two and a half per cent on the faith of being paid in cash." But he tells me it is the custom of the place to pay in bills, and sits down and draws a bill at three months after date *payable at his own shop* ! "And what am I to do with this ?" "Oh, ye may take it to Sir William Forbes, and he'll discount it for ye on paying him three months' interest." "And what can I do with his notes ?" "He'll giv ye a bill on London at forty-five days." "So, sir, after allowing twelvemonth's credit, and two and a half per cent discount, and exorbitant charges, which you have no claim on us to pay, I must be content with a bill for which we are not in cash, for four months and a half. Well, well !" "And now, sir," says he, "if you are going to your inn, I'll gang with ye and take a glass of wine."

Later Mr. Smith went to Glasgow only to find that as far as business methods were concerned there was little to choose between

East and West. In one respect, however, Edinburgh's bad eminence was undisputed, viz., the disconcerting squalor of its streets and domestic economy generally. The contrast between the unrivalled natural beauty of the city and the unspeakable filthiness of its streets and closes keeps Mr. Smith in a constant simmer of bewildered indignation. He can only suggest that it may proceed from a kind of cynic conceit on the part of the populace.

'The most offensive indication of general slovenliness is afforded by the dirtiness of the garb and persons of female servants: for a female will generally be neat and clean, where the want of neatness and cleanliness would procure her the appellation of a *slattern*, which to an English woman is one of the most disgraceful of epithets—but here it is not a term of reproach. A Scottish lass will enter a handsome parlour with her face begrimed with soot and dirt, perhaps barefooted; and should anyone be so fastidious as to find fault with her appearance, she will claim a merit for her contempt of the trifling attentions to personal decoration.'

In Glasgow, so far as the city itself was concerned, this unamiable trait was much less in evidence. Indeed, in 1815, Glasgow could impress the visitor as 'an uncommonly fine city,' combining antique grandeur with modern elegance and conveying an impression of brightness and cleanliness. Its civic rulers, Mr. Smith notes, unlike those of Edinburgh, were active and zealous for improvement. He also notes, however, that their zeal would have been the better for a little more judgment and knowledge: the process which has made the Glasgow of to-day a city of mishandled opportunities was already beginning, though in 1815 it had not done much harm.

'The Trongate, in length and width, in the variety of its buildings, added to their magnitude and substantial air, excels any street I ever saw. Like the High Street in Oxford, it has just enough of bend to bring all the houses on one side in view. This grand street is crossed at right angles by another of greater antiquity; the view from the "Cross" forms as fine a picture as human habitations can make.'

At which pleasing picture anyone who knows Glasgow to-day can only murmur sadly 'Quantum mutatus ab illo!'

Just as Edinburgh illustrated the arrogance and complacency of the Scot, so, if Mr. Smith is to be believed, Glasgow was the great example of his third signal failing, which is 'gentility.'



'Glasgow, having risen into opulence with astonishing rapidity, may be supposed to contain a great many persons whose exertions have raised them high above the stations they originally filled. These men find themselves insecure in the comparatively elevated society to an equality with which they aspire ; and, to avoid the imputation of *vulgarity* from their new associates, are willing to relinquish every opinion they have in common with the order to which they formerly belonged ; and they abuse the *mob*, that they themselves may not be confounded or classed with it ; for none have more horror of *vulgarity* than those who feel half afraid that their own *gentility* is questionable. It would be amusing, if it was not an indication of total want of feeling, to hear a person, who perhaps could not tell who his grandfather was, most pathetically deploring the insults which *genteel* people received in the presumption and pretensions of a *rabble*. It is curious to observe the universal pretension to gentility. B. remarks that it commences with the ability to wear a *white* neckcloth. . . . The *genteel* people of Scotland are contented to be represented in the Legislature by men without talent, chosen by a few individuals, because a more perfect system would give *low* people similar privileges with themselves. . . . There is scarcely a county or town in Scotland which has not afforded instances (encouraged by the sycophantic suppleness of the gentry, and the emulative submission of the would-be genteel) of gross violations of the acknowledged rights of the subject. At this time no one is admitted into the Court of Justice at Glasgow during a trial without an order from a magistrate ! and this innovation, which might ultimately lead to the entire exclusion of the public, is acquiesced in, and *even approved*, on the ground that the *mob* are thereby excluded ! and a learned magistrate has been heard to chuckle with great complacency at the *gentility* of the audience, now that the *rabble* were being kept out !'

Although Mr. Smith's strictures are usually couched in general terms, he does make it clear that they are directed solely against the so-called upper classes. For the qualities of the Scottish poor he has unqualified admiration. Even in 1815 the English labouring man was well fed in comparison with his Scottish brother, but the Scottish poor preferred a miserable standard of living to the ignominy of accepting public assistance.

'This becoming pride, this manly independent feeling, is produced and supported by the education which every individual has received. The labourer or mechanic has acquired liberal and enlarged notions, which teach him to respect himself, and to desire and value respect from others. He endeavours to raise himself

above the rank of society in which he is placed ; and, if he finds he cannot succeed to the extent of his wish, he takes care that his children shall not meet with any obstruction in the same pursuit from any unbecoming action of his."

Accordingly when B. rallies him on having a contemptible opinion of the Scottish nation, Mr. Smith denies it with spirit.

'On the contrary, I entertain the highest admiration of the character of those who compose nine-tenths of your community. My contempt is confined to the remaining tenth, who presumptuously call themselves the nation, and who, without private virtue, or public spirit, arrogate to themselves the high national character, which deservedly belongs to those they affect to despise, and whom they wish to depress, that they themselves may appear more elevated.'

Before taking our leave of Mr. Smith, we must have one more glimpse of him, not as a critic of Scottish men and Scottish manners, but as an admirer of the material progress of the age and a prophet of the wonders to come in the near future. The dilatoriness of a creditor of dubious solvency having obliged him to postpone his departure, he took the opportunity to make a little excursion, down the Clyde to Greenock, thence to the Gairloch, Loch Long and Loch Lomond—he does not seem to have thought of visiting Loch Katrine. The trip enabled him to make his first voyage in a steamboat, and the experience filled him with enthusiasm.

'I have hopes, if I live twenty years longer, to see steam engines on board every large ship. With paddles, which might be unshipped at pleasure, I conceive they might be used at sea ; and if it were found inconvenient to have the engine on board the vessel, a small boat of great strength might be constructed for it alone, which might take in tow vessels of any size.'

It may be observed that while Mr. Smith does not seem to have heard of Henry Bell, the father of British steam navigation, he does mention that in the opinion of the Scotsmen of his day the undoubted inventor of the steamboat was not Fulton, but Patrick Miller, of Dalswinton. Curiously enough, though he has a great deal to say about another and much less happy product of Miller's versatile brain—the introduction of florin grass into Scotland—he never mentions his name in that connection.

One more point and we shall have done with Mr. Smith. Was he a real bagman with literary tastes, or only a literary device ? I

strongly suspect the latter. The style is too practised for the work of an amateur. Further, the copy of his book which I have was the author's own and contains his MS. corrections and emendations for a second edition—apparently never realised—which are obviously the work of one who habitually wrote for the Press and knew the mystery of proof correction. I even doubt if Mr. Smith was an Englishman. As already observed, his command of the Doric is suspiciously good, and for all his elegant English an occasional little Scotticism bewrayeth him. The title-page, though it bears the imprint of Longman, bears as well those of Archibald Constable, William Turnbull (Glasgow), and M. N. Mahon (Dublin); and seeing that the printing was done in a Glasgow newspaper office, there is some ground for inferring that the real publisher was Turnbull and that our Mr. Smith was some vivacious Scottish scribe who had a mind (as some have to-day) to say what he thought about his countrymen.

DONALD CARSWELL.

## *THE CHASING OF CHEVY.*

BY F. H. DORSET.

'CHEVY' MONTGOMERY walked down Alfred Street, Lambeth, at a quiet meditative pace, as though placidly oblivious of the fact that both Police Constable Murkins and his plain-clothes friend, Inspector Anderson, were deeply interested in his peregrination. Mr. Montgomery was enjoying himself; more, he was deeply pleased with himself.

To look at him you would not have imagined that Chevy had very much to be pleased about. He was not tall, in fact only by about half an inch had Nature redeemed him from dwarf-hood. He was lean, loose at the joints, large-headed, and unbeautiful; also his clothing, though new, was ill-fitting and of a peculiar maroon-brown, inclining to purple, which did not suit his complexion. His feet were shod, however, with neat brown shoes, and these shoes had rubber soles. The plain-clothes friend of Police Constable Murkins had come to the conclusion several hours previously that those same feet were tireless and that their owner was the hardest walker he had ever known. The plain-clothes man wilted a little, willy-nilly, but Chevy Montgomery appeared to be as fresh as paint.

They two had begun their mutual yet personally separate promenade at 9 a.m. outside His Majesty's Prison of Wormwood Scrubs, and it was now three-thirty in the afternoon. Not that they had walked incessantly all the time. There had been a merciful break round about twelve when Chevy had lunched substantially at a public-house and his follower also had repaired waste tissue, and part of the time they had ridden in trams and 'buses. But it was a close, dull, airless day, and the plain-clothes friend had been glad when at last they arrived at Lambeth and he could pick up Murkins, detailed for special duty round about Alfred Street on the task of finding out just where Chevy Montgomery meant to live now. Eighteen successful house-breakings stood to Chevy's record, but only for one of them, the last, had he been tried and convicted. The Metropolitan Police knew, and Chevy knew that they knew, that the other seventeen stood to

his account, but since he had never previously been caught, and irrefragable proof of his guilt save for the last could not be produced, he had duly served six months for a First Conviction and had finished his term of imprisonment that morning. Chevy's address for the last fifteen years—ever since he had attained his majority and left home—had been a variable quantity. At present that which he had imparted to the authorities as his intended dwelling-place—namely, an apartment over a small general-shop at Brixton—did not satisfy them. They had an uneasy feeling that Chevy's permanent headquarters were elsewhere, and to William Anderson had been entrusted the task of finding this out and thus enabling the representatives of Law and Order to keep an adequate eye upon the incomings and outgoings of Chevy; wherefore William was now suffering from sore feet.

Chevy, to be sure, really had been to Brixton, and had there received a fervent welcome from the pretty widow who owned the general-shop; but William's patience in waiting outside the back door had been amply rewarded. Chevy, having gone in at the front luggageless, had emerged at the back gripping the small suitcase which he still carried, evidently bound, reasoned William, for other quarters for the night; perhaps out of consideration for the widow's reputation. Enquiry on the part of William several days previously had revealed the fact that Mrs. Roper, though she might welcome the released Chevy with kisses and tears, was a lady of excellent character and sound capabilities. William was sorry about her, because, of course, Chevy was duping her. Chevy, according to the Metropolitan Police, was a crook and a clever one, and that anyone so undersized and unprepossessing could succeed in engaging the affections of a comely widow, whom William himself felt that he would have enjoyed escorting to Richmond on a summer Sunday, argued very great cleverness and a silver tongue. So meditated William, pursuing his quarry at a discreet distance, while Chevy, bearing him no ill will, laughed inwardly at his own pleasant thoughts. For Chevy had no intention at all of deceiving or plundering the pretty widow. Chevy, having meditated much of late, had seen the error of his ways and had decided to reform. The proceeds of past misdeeds, such as had not been spent, he intended to invest in the general-shop on the day of their marriage, and himself to become his wife's assistant in the business.

When Chevy had first started out upon a burglarious career he

had made a pledge with himself to quit it on the very first occasion when he was nabbed. Sooner or later nabbing seemed to be inevitable if one operated on a scale worth practising, and once nabbed you were a marked man. Chevy had decided to make hay while the sun shone and to collect capital thereby for some other safer if less exciting enterprise, and Fate had allowed him an unusually good run for his money, in more senses than one, for, in spite of his apparent ungainliness, Mr. Montgomery owned long legs in comparison with the rest of him and, debarred from football in his youth, had practised sprinting methodically. Further, he had studied the art of jiu-jitsu, and, relying upon these two accomplishments and his mother-wits, he had always refrained from carrying a gun. He was a tender-hearted man, greatly averse to bloodshed. So, for fifteen years, Chevy, operating about once a year or so upon a well-studied 'crib,' had managed to evade the Law and line his pockets, and when finally an unexpected croquet-hoop had brought about his downfall and capture at Hampstead, with no greater haul than a plated napkin-ring in his pocket, his innocence of firearms and the fact that this was his first proven offence had stood him in good stead.

Chevy, therefore, to all intents and purposes, was now setting forth upon a blameless life, yet there remained for him a deep joy in deluding such simple souls as William Anderson and his friend Police Constable Murkins. In sheer exuberance of spirits, bearing an empty fibre suit-case weighing a few ounces, and bent for no particular destination beyond an ultimate return to the shop at Brixton, Chevy had decided to celebrate his restored freedom by taking William and his colleagues for a walk, and presently, by some astute movement, to shake them off and leave them guessing while he returned peacefully to the house of Mrs. Roper, which henceforward was to be his.

The banns were to go up, quite respectably, for the first time on Sunday three weeks, and until the wedding day Chevy was to be in all ways a well-conducted paying-guest in a household chaperoned by the widow's married sister. Nothing could be more completely regular and respectable, nothing could have lent a greater spice of enjoyment to this day's innocent merry-making. Chevy had enjoyed his lunch and the stout which had accompanied it. The meal, by this time, had well subsided, and if he returned to Lamb Lane, Brixton, at four-thirty Rosie had promised him tea and crumpets. It was about time to shake off Messrs. Anderson

and Murkins and to make tracks for Brixton, home, and beauty. Therefore Mr. Montgomery had thoughtfully turned down the uninspiring and more or less empty no-thoroughfare of Alfred Street.

Alfred Street ran with suicidal suddenness into the side of the railway embankment, and stopped there stunned. The houses on the right side of Alfred Street kept their front doors and variously curtained front windows facing into Alfred Street itself, but their back doors, set in direct line with their fronts at the end of oil-clothed passages, opened upon steps leading into an asphalted court set between themselves and the backs of the houses in the next street. The upper end of this court opened on the main thoroughfare, its lower was blocked by the embankment, but to the best of Chevy's recollection there was a narrow cut between the houses over the way through which another busy street yclept Lilac Road, which tunnelled beneath the embankment, could be reached. Once there one could board tram or 'bus and travel whither one would.

The houses in Alfred Street were small and squat, although like most dwellings in the district they were sublet to several tenants, each holding a room or two and paying rent to the householder. Those facing into Lilac Road were somewhat larger, some possessing shops on their ground-floor. In days past Chevy had, for a while, visited an acquaintance who lodged at Number Five Alfred Street. That individual was no more, but the topography of the buildings was imprinted on Chevy's mind. It only remained to be seen if any of the much-inhabited houses happened to have left its front door ajar. But Alfred Street all remained discreetly shut or else had its front steps full of children until he reached Number Thirty-One, which nestled against the embankment.

Here Chevy Montgomery's pace slowed down. He halted by the little iron gate guarding the grimy forecourt of the house, glanced at the door, and, swinging the gate open and then carefully latching its rusty latch behind him, he ascended the ill-kept flight of steps to the front door and pushed it open, closing and latching it, also, after him. Then, on quick silent feet, he approached the back door, also, obligingly, ajar, a polite explanation of error ready on his lips should he encounter landlord or lodger—'Do you know if Mr. Phipps is in? First floor front, isn't he? . . . So sorry, my mistake! He said number thirty-one and walk right in!'

Chevy was not required to voice this apology and explanation,



for the narrow passage running from front to back of the dingy house remained empty of all save himself. The stairs rose out of it on his left, the passage slipping by them and under them as they twisted, and the distant clang and rattle of traffic from Lilac Road filled his ears as he went forward. He opened the back door quickly, and found himself, as he had expected, at the top of another steep flight of cemented steps, with an iron handrail, giving exit from the house: but instead of dropping direct upon the asphalt court, these led down to a small yard covered in almost completely by a broken trellis roof thick with the withering autumnal foliage of hops, and he remembered in a flash that the last two houses of the row were somewhat smaller than the rest, permitting space for two tiny back-yards. But this he only took note of in a fleeting side-light of observation. The thing which startled him was that a burly man in a blue serge suit who was half-way up these back steps turned and fled instantly at the sight of him, leaping over an obstacle which lay huddled at the foot of the steps, and bolting incontinently through a brown door in the yard wall out into the court beyond without even pausing to fasten it; and that the obstacle over which he leapt in his flight was the face-down body of a little old gentleman, whom a wood-chopper, now flung down beside him, had sent quickly, mercifully, but untidily, out of this world and into the next.

Chevy Montgomery stood for half a second petrified and sick at the top of the steps. Then he dropped his suitcase and gave chase on the impulse of the moment. He had seen the murderer full, and although a soft grey hat pulled low obscured the upper part of his face, Chevy's gaze had noted a gold-crowned front tooth, green tie, and an air of gentility; also a marked fairness of complexion. He would know him anywhere, the cowardly swine! Chevy leapt the dead body and did not wait to observe it further. A man with a skull practically split in two must indubitably be dead and past aid, and the immediate thing to do was to catch the gold-toothed shedder of blood. Only when he was already out of the yard and on the asphalt beyond did Chevy realise the awkwardness of his position. The wearer of blue serge had already vanished and his pursuer, suddenly chill to the marrow, realised that his own impetuosity had landed him in a remarkably queer situation; for already a knock sounded on the closed front door. He himself had been virtually bolting from the attentions of the police force, an elderly gentleman who had recently stood in his

line of retreat lay newly slain, and his own empty suitcase lay beside him in company with the wood-chopper. Chevy knew that capture now involved explanations many and hard of credence. His best hope lay in himself capturing the murderer with the golden tooth, and capturing him quickly.

The whole time since he had stood on the top of the steps face to face with the man and now, when he stood outside the back-yard, had been but a few seconds. Chevy's trained eyes, keen with fear and zeal, told him at once several crucial facts: first, that the court, though deserted, offered no cover for a bulky man, and was too long to permit of escape by the top end; next, that an unseemly fishy cat bearing part of a herring in her jaws was just bolting into the court from the cut, evidently disturbed at a quiet meal in the alley-way. Up there, then, Golden-tooth had bolted. Pausing only to fasten the yard door Chevy followed, but did not emerge into Lilac Road. A window of muffed-glass giving on the cut in the side of one of the houses arrested him. It had plainly just been slammed down from within, for it still quivered. It was set about five feet from the ground and boots had scraped its sill, leaving a dead hop-leaf adhering to the wood. Chevy stopped abruptly and examined it. Here, then, Golden-tooth had gone to ground. Behind that window he might be waiting to come to grips with any other entrant.

Perhaps Chevy Montgomery at that moment was a little unbalanced by his recent experience of prison-life and his mixed motives for reformation. At any rate it did not occur to him to go back and lead William Anderson and Murkins to observe this evidence of the murderer's retreat, that they might deal with it legally. Instead, filled with the exhilaration of a terrier at a rat-hole, he laid his ear to the pane and listened, blessing his abnormal sense of hearing. Distinctly from within he detected the sound of feet moving hurriedly across a wooden floor, stumbling against some object that rattled slightly; and then came the cautious click of a closed door. Chevy lingered no longer.

With experience, and a clasp-knife, purchased and ground that morning at a cutler's while Anderson cooled his heels outside, he began his latest, unpremeditated job of house-breaking, and he had drawn himself over the sill and quietly re-closed the window when a Pan-pipe clamour of police-whistles and running feet filled the court he had just quitted. He leant against the wall of the dark little room he had entered and looked about him.

He was in a species of cubby-hole, filled with odds and ends and shelves crowded with a miscellaneous collection of house-cleaning materials and chopped firewood. There was a slot gas-meter in one corner and an ash-bucket half-full of clinkers cumbered the floor by his feet. Gaunt brooms, hard and soft, leant tipsily beside him, and there was a damp gassy smell about the place, subtly flavoured with mouse. It was nearly dark in the October afternoon, and the door, which he found and opened inch by inch as soon as his eyes had grown used to the gloom, gave upon a black hinterland of passage-hall, illuminated only by a fan-light over the front door so thickly grimed as to be opaque. Another odour struck him here—the odour of third-rate lodging-house with which he had long been familiar. Golden-tooth, living here, was probably one of several inhabitants, and had fled to his own quarters. A climbing stairway slanted up over Chevy's head, but beneath its overhanging shadow yawned the depths of a basement stair. Chevy was certain that he had heard his quarry's steps descend; *ergo*, Golden-tooth lived in the basement.

A great deal of noise had now arisen in the back court, and feet went running heavily through the cut towards Lilac Road. Quite a number of people seemed to be intent on chivying Chevy. He wished suddenly that he had been less precipitate in his actions. He was in it now, up to the neck. He stood very still, listening and cursing. From below, as he craned down the black basement stair-well, came the sound of a scraping chair and a woman's muffled exclamation, responded to indistinctly in masculine tones. Golden-tooth, then, was not alone. The devil take the situation! Chevy drew back hurriedly and silently into the box-room, for a basement door opened, releasing a flare of light, and a woman bearing a taper, evidently with intent to kindle the hall-jet, began to mount the wooden stairs; a thin, flat, middle-aged female, who passed within two feet of him, lugubriously attentive to her task. She walked half-way down the drab-and-chocolate-papered hall-way, lit an old-fashioned burner in a ground-glass globe, and then stood, burning taper in hand, listening to the cries without. At the same instant a latch-key turned in the front-door lock, and two young men came in excitedly.

'Ere's a go, Mother Parker!' said the foremost. 'Old Montgomery in Alfred Street's been done in with 'is own wood-chopper, and the chap as done it 'as got clear away! Did you 'ear the police whistles?'

The woman stood like a figure petrified, her taper dripping and flaring in her hand. 'Montgom'ry!' she repeated huskily, 'Montgom'ry! Is 'e dead?'

'Dead as mutton!' said the young man with shocked relish. 'As it 'appened the cops was after enquirin' at the 'ouse about a bloke as 'ad gorn in there. Wanted to know if it was 'is regular address. They didn't get no answer at first, which weren't surprisin' seein' as old Montgom'ry was lyin' in 'is back-yard with 'is 'ead in 'alf. Then Mrs. Bowes come down from the first-floor and opens to 'em and goes to call old Montgom'ry as 'ad, she knew, gorn into the yard to chop firewood, and being deaf might not 'ave 'eard the ringin'. And, o' course, she found 'm and started screamin'. The chap as done it 'ad got away by then, but 'e left a suitcase be'ind. Don't know if it 'ad any nime on it. Someone saw a feller streakin' up through the cut by this 'ouse and one of the cops run after him whistlin' for 'elp, but they lost sight of 'im. I shouldn't wonder if the p'lice searches all these 'ouses. There's all sorts lodgin' about 'ere, and they ain't all as respectable as you keeps your lodgers, not by a long chalk!'

'Montgom'ry!' said Mrs. Parker in a stunned voice, 'what, old Montgom'ry? Why . . . 'e 'adn't been up from 'Ampshire a month, and 'ardly knew anybody but us and you! We was the only ones as knew . . . As 'e been robbed?'

'Sure to 'ave bin, if the chap 'ad time and 'e 'ad anything to tike.'

'E 'ad all 'is savins with 'im in the 'ouse!' cried Mother Parker tragically. 'E uster 'ave a small-holdin' down next my people's in 'Ampshire, and 'e sold up and come and took the ground-floor in that 'ouse so's to be near us while 'e was tryin' to find 'is son what'd left 'ome years ago. 'Eard 'e'd got into trouble and was waitin' to go to 'im when he'd come out of stir and give 'im a fresh start, 'e was. I *told* 'im to leave 'is money in the Bank till 'e needed it, and now 'e've been murdered for it! Oh Gawd!'

She stared from one young man to the other, helplessly.

'Whatever will Parker say?' she said. 'I won't 'ardly dare to tell 'im, 'is 'eart's so bad and they was such friends! Why, Parker meant ter go in there fer a smoke with 'im this very afternoon, only 'e felt queer comin' 'ome from the ware'ouse and come straight back instead. 'E's sittin' in the kitchen now, feelin' 'is 'eart, and I've just give 'im a drop of brandy. I won't never be able to break the news to 'im!'

Inside the box-room Chevy stood like a frozen man, rigid with understanding and incredulity. Impossible! Impossible that the parent in Hampshire, whom he had planned to visit not as a returned prodigal, but as a successful petty tradesman, wife on arm, should be here, dead and robbed in Lambeth, and that he, Chevy, his only child, should have sprung unwitting across his own father's body to chase his murderer and leave every trace of having committed the crime himself! Black horror such as he had never imagined poured over 'old Montgomery's' son. He saw as from a great distance that the second young man was patting a sobbing Mrs. Parker on the back. Then the basement stairs creaked afresh, and Chevy's momentarily arrested heart jumped sickeningly. Golden-tooth was coming up.

Mr. Parker emerged slowly and joined the group. He was burly yet curiously light-footed for his size, neatly clad in serge, with a white shirt and collar and a green tie. Divested of his hat he showed bald and fair, but flushed just now with a pinkish-blue tinge eloquent of heart-trouble. A nervous smile, hovering about his mouth, revealed a gold-crowned front tooth. Chevy's fingers twitched. His petrified horror melted into savage wrath. The Law might go hang and he himself might hang as a double murderer and a parricide; all he wanted now was a fair chance with his clasp-knife at that thick throat above the green tie before they caught him. He even forgot the existence of the widow at Brixton.

'What's the trouble?' asked Mr. Parker. 'What's the matter, Maggy?' Mrs. Parker looked up and silenced Mr. Gibb.

'Someone's broke into Montgomery's rooms and robbed 'im,' she said, mistress of herself again. 'Montgomery's 'urt. No, you can't do nothing, Jack, so don't go rushin' across. The police'll be there and a doctor.'

'Montgomery . . . 'urt!' said Mr. Parker, and sat down heavily on a wooden chair in the hall-way.

'Dead,' said Mr. Gibb, no longer to be restrained. 'Feller 'it 'im with 'is own wood-chopper.'

'Dead!' repeated Mr. Parker, in the tone of one trying to realise an impossibility, 'dead!'

'Ere!' exclaimed Mother Parker, touching her husband's shoulder. 'Don't you be too upset! 'E can't 'ave felt much, I don't suppose; can't 'ave 'ad time; and 'e's gorn to 'eaven if anyone 'as. P'raps Mr. Gibb and Mr. Brine 'll go and find out a bit more for us if you'll sit still.'

'Ave they caught the chap as did it?'

'Not yet. But you bet they will!' It was the younger, quieter man who spoke. 'We'll go and find out the latest. Come on, Gibb!'

Nothing loath with their errand the two young men returned to the street. Mrs. Parker continued to pat and soothe her husband, who continued to sit on the hall-chair wiping and re-wiping his face with a handkerchief that matched his tie. Chevy stared at her from the shadow. So she was old Kegg's daughter at home! He remembered her vaguely as grown and married a bit above her while he was still at the village school. He wondered what avocation the well-dressed Parker followed at his 'warehouse.' He looked like a clerk, yet talked in tones as little educated as his wife. If only the woman would leave them alone together for just three minutes!

'I'm thankful we've only let the other floors for storage,' remarked Mrs. Parker, 'and that there's only us and Mr. Gibb and Mr. Brine and that decent chap Miller what 'as the ground-floor back livin' 'ere, and 'im away fer the week-end. The police won't find nobody suspicious in *this* 'ouse.' Her hand, stroking along her husband's left sleeve, stopped suddenly. 'Your sleeve!' she cried in horrified accents, 'your cuff! *There's blood on your coat cuff, Jack!* . . . it's on my fingers! Jack! *Where've you been?*'

'Shut up!' The man raised a face which had become lead-white. 'Lissen! I been there, *but I didn't do it!* I swear to God, I didn't do it! only I've been a fool. And they could fasten it on me. A chap saw me.'

'*Saw you?*'

'In the back-yard, w'ere I found 'im. I come in that way, quiet like. I was going to ask old Montgom'ry to lend me twenty pound. I 'ad to 'ave twenty pound. When I found 'im . . . dead . . . I didn't shout fer 'elp at once. I touched 'im to see if 'e was alive at all—that's 'ow I got them spots on the edge of me coat-sleeve, I suppose . . . and then I remembered 'is savin's . . . which 'e wouldn't need now . . . and I've been that desperate the last few days, wantin' ter replace the money in the till before Monday when the boss checks it, that I was goin' into the 'ouse to get 'is cash-box from where I knew 'e kept it when I come face to face with another feller, as may 'ave been the murderer for all I knows, but I lost me 'ead and run for it, 'stead of yellin' fer the perlice. And 'e come after me! I 'eard 'im!'

Mother Parker had recoiled as he spoke. Her voice, cracked and harsh, came loudly to Chevy's ears.

'Oh you liar!' she cried. 'You've lied afore and you've stole afore and I forgive and believed in you again! Thought you was straight again. You been betting once more and you . . . you've been and killed . . .'

'I 'aven't! Fer Gawd's sake shut up and 'elp me! You're me wife. . . .'

A loud knock and ring broke upon the conversation. Already Chevy had become aware of fumbings at the outside of the box-room window, and, stepping soundlessly forward, had drawn the door to behind him and merged himself into the shadow of the staircase at the mouth of the basement-descent. He heard Mrs. Parker's sibilant whisper to her husband as she turned to answer the imperative summons.

'Shove yer 'and in yer trouser pocket and keep yer 'ead this time. That's the perlice!' Then the door opened upon the red friendly countenance of Police Constable Murkins, who had often drunk tea in their basement living-room in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Parker when off duty. The woman involuntarily sighed her relief.

'Sorry to trouble you, Mother Parker,' said Murkins apologetically. 'But we're after a chap as seems to 'ave bolted in 'ere through yer side window, which you did ought ter keep locked or barred up. Leastways, there's marks on the ledge outside and we've posted a feller there. I'm afraid, with your permission, we'll 'ave to look round inside this 'ouse. You 'aven't 'eard anyone, 'ave you?'

'No, I 'aven't, Mr. Murkins. I've been busy in the kitchen downstairs with me 'usband as 'as 'ad one of 'is bad turns, and we didn't 'ear nothin' until the row started outside, and then Mr. Gibb come rushin' in and told us what's 'appened. It's upset me and my 'usband terrible.'

'Yes,' said Murkins. 'Montgomery was your friend, wasn't he? Well it's 'is son we're after. Just come out of jail and goes straight and does in 'is old Dad and pinches 'is cash-box. Any'ow, it's gorn from the old chap's room. One of the kids next door to you ran out in the court at the back to catch 'er pussy-cat what had stolen an 'erring and she saw the feller bolt into the cut by this 'ouse; but there was people standin' at the top end in Lilac Road and they didn't notice anyone come out. So we examined



the window into your box-room without opening it and there's fresh mud on the ledge. Me and me pal'—a younger member of the force loomed over the doorstep—'wants a look inside that room.'

'What's the feller like?' asked Parker, who had risen and stood away from the full illumination of the gas.

'Little chap, big-'eaded and dressed all in brown. Very quick on 'is pins. Smith'—to the younger constable—'you stand 'ere, so 'e can't make a dash for it if 'e's in there. 'E 'asn't got a gun any'ow. Now!'

Chevy by this time had dissolved silkenly down into a subterranean passage running fore and aft from coal-cellar to larder past the door of the basement living-room. It was dimly lit by mingled firelight and gas-light through the half-opened living-room door, and beyond this room he glimpsed a back kitchen with sink and copper. Then he flattened himself against the dark wall at the side of the stair and listened fiercely.

'Nothing in 'ere,' said Murkins facetiously, 'unless you counts brooms and beetles. But some of those ashes are spilt. Looks like someone's passed through. 'E 'asn't 'ad time to get far, so we'd better 'ave a look at the basement, seeing it's so 'andy to nip into from 'ere.'

'E can't be nowhere in the basement, Mr. Murkins,' said Mrs. Parker, who, apparently out of deference to her visitors, had removed her soiled apron and was rolling it up, rubbing the fingers of her right hand among its folds as she did so. 'Me and Parker 'ave been down there all along, and I've just been to the coal-cellar ter fill the scuttle and to the larder fer milk fer tea. There ain't nowhere else except our living-room and the back kitchen, and I've been there the whole afternoon, washin' and ironin'. More like, if the chap *did* get in, that 'e done a bolt upstairs. We've only got this floor let, and there's only nine rooms to the 'ouse, includin' the basement and two attics. Our bedroom's the first-floor front. The rest's all full of my 'usband's boss's stored furniture and packin'-cases, except the attics, and we don't let them. You can get out on to the roof easy from the back attic, and there's an 'igh parapet anyone could creep along be'ind on to the next roof and right up the street. If 'e sneaked up when 'e got in we wouldn't 'ave 'eard 'im, ten to one.'

'What about these three ground-floor rooms?'

'They're let, as you knows, Mr. Murkins, to Mr. Gibb and Mr.

Brine in the front, and Mr. Miller 'as the other one lookin' into the court. That winder is barred, so no one couldn't get in or out, and the door's locked on this side because Miller's away fer the week-end at Walthamstow at 'is sister's. 'E's got the key. No one couldn't bolt in there without pickin' the lock.'

'Well, our chap's clever at that, but 'e'd 'ardly wait ter do it under the circumstances. We'll take a squint round these two rooms, then, and then go upstairs. The 'ouse is being watched, back, side, and front, but that roof makes it awkward for us.'

The lodgings of Messrs. Gibb and Brine yielded no young man in brown.

'Up we goes!' remarked the facetious Murkins. 'See here, Parker. We know you fer a reliable man, and, even though you 'ave got a 'cart I don't envy you, I s'pose you can stay sat on that chair and give a shout if you 'ear or see anything suspicious? Mrs. Parker can stop with you.'

'Certainly! But 'ere's Gibb back again! P'raps 'e'd do it and let me and the missus go down. I'm feelin' shaky.'

'The kettle's boiling downstairs,' said Mrs. Parker, 'and I was just going to get him a cup er tea. If Mr. Gibb don't mind sittin' 'ere . . .'

'All right. Sorry fer your 'usband, but it can't be 'elped, all this upset. You stop there, Gibb, and keep yer ears cocked up.'

The two policemen vanished up the stairs, the junior kindling gas-jets as he went, their feet echoing on bare boards.

'Any news?' asked Parker of Gibb, preparing to relinquish his post and follow Mrs. Parker, already awaiting him anxiously by the basement flight.

'Only what you knows already—chap's supposed to be in the 'ouse. Did you 'ear it's Montgom'ry's own son? I come in to see what's 'appening, but Brine's round at the other 'ouse tryin' to get a squint. . . . 'Ere, there did ought to be two of us set in this 'all!'

'I can't 'elp your cold feet. I'm thinkin' of me 'usband's 'cart!' said Mother Parker rapidly. 'You come on down, Jack, and keep quiet, whatever's 'appening!'

Chevy's back stiffened. The two descended the stairs in single file, but the man came first, and although a quick leap and a slash of the clasp-knife might almost have done his work, Chevy could not bring himself to kill the murderer at his wife's feet. After

all she was Maggy Keggs, and the deed must be contrived decently when her back was turned. Capture in any case was almost a certainty, and he was past being deterred by thought of it; as for Parker's story, it struck him as too palpably untrue for consideration, but perhaps he might hear more before he struck. Chevy became but a deeper shadow by the coal-cellar, and the couple passed into their living-room together. Mrs. Parker shut the door swiftly. He heard her muffled voice speaking rapidly but indistinctly, footsteps across the room, and the sound of splashing and running water in the back kitchen. Parker was removing the evidence from his cuff, and sharply Chevy realised that with it probably went his own last chance of legal deliverance. For evermore, short of some miracle, he would be branded as parricide. No one would ever believe the tale he had to tell, except, perhaps, Rosie Roper at Brixton. And would she? Memory of her rushed over him poignantly. Rosie knew all about him, all about his old father down in Hampshire. Rosie had, for some obscure reason, loved, forgiven, desired to reform him. Would she, even now, believe him? It was asking a lot, even of Rosie; and with the possibility of her incredulity came despair. Nothing would matter then. Let the Law hang him, at least he would do justice to Parker first!

He was hesitating whether to creep closer to the living-room door and try to overhear more of what was going forward within when Mr. Gibb's voice called hoarsely down the stair.

'I say, Mother Parker!' he called cautiously, 'what abaht a cup er tea fer me up 'ere?'

There was no response from the Parker quarters, only a low murmur of conferring voices and the sound of a coat being vigorously brushed, then the faint tragic echo of a woman's subdued weeping. Silhouetted against the dim illumination of the stair-head Mr. Gibb hesitated, listening; then, casting a quick glance backwards, he ran down softly and opened the living-room door. Mrs. Parker uttered a startled exclamation. Parker, in his shirt-sleeves, sat in his wonted easy chair by the fire, scowling and smiling simultaneously.

'If it's ready,' said Mr. Gibb ingratiatingly, 'I'll carry a cup er tea upstairs with me. It's chilly, sitting in that passage.'

Mrs. Parker dried her eyes and looked at him contemptuously. 'Kettle's boiling,' she said, 'and you didn't ought to 'ave left yer plice. Murkins'll want ter know why ef 'e catches you.'

'E's busy enough upstairs,' retorted Gibb, 'and there ain't no one 'idin' on the ground-floor, and I'm that thirsty . . .'

'Well,' said Parker, 'if there's anyone upstairs 'e could sneak dahn now and get away, with no one in the 'all. You'd better get on back.'

'But if the kettle's boilin' . . .'

'All right! I'll make the tea!' said Mother Parker wearily. 'It'll only take 'arf a minute and you can carry yer cup up and drink it in the 'all. Only, if them cops catches you, don't say as I called you down.'

Mr. Gibb stepped into the living-room, and simultaneously Chevy floated upstairs again on his soundless rubber soles. He knew Murkins, a constable garrulous perhaps but conscientious. Murkins and Smith would anon examine that basement thoroughly, despite their conviction of Parker integrity. They would likewise force open and search the absent Miller's locked room. But they had already scanned the two ground-floor front apartments rented by Messrs. Gibb and Brine, who seemed to be young men in comfortable circumstances. In one of those rooms a temporary but safe hiding-place might be discovered, and Chevy, reasoning from a fair knowledge of human nature, opined that as soon as the police had left the house the two lodgers would inevitably spend part of the evening in the basement discussing the murder with their landlord and his wife, who, on their part, would probably encourage this proceeding for fear of appearing in any way to be noticeable or unnatural. But the Parkers slept in the first-floor front, and during the conclave below it should be more than possible to ascend to that floor and find a fresh place of concealment among the stored goods until, at some moment during night or morning, Parker only should be up there. And then the account could be settled, and after that the Deluge. No use bungling the thing through haste.

Chevy was across the momentarily empty hall even as this sequence of thought ran through his quick brain. In both front rooms the constables had lit the gas and drawn down the dingy blinds. Chevy dropped on hands and knees to avoid casting a silhouette upon the blind. The first apartment proved to be the young men's joint bedroom, the second their sitting-room, and here, just as sounds from above and below indicated the ascent and descent of the forces combined against him, Chevy sighted the hiding-place he desired, the only one which the shabby place afforded. On each side of the hearth, where a fire had been laid

but not lit, stood a damaged leather arm-chair which had come down in the world from some club or smoking-room, and set at an angle across the corner of the room stood their companion couch, a deep, high-backed affair with sagging springs. Chevy vaulted it lightly and dropped into the corner behind it. An old rug draped to hide the couch's defects hung to the ground in front of it and concealed him from below, the high back covered him from above, and over him towered an aspidistra on a mahogany pedestal. Nobody was likely to disturb him here. He crouched down, his head almost on the floor, and wondered at the quietude of his own heart-beats. In his own mind he had become only justice personified. Justice, calm, cold, and deadly. His white-hot blood seemed like ice.

Mr. Gibb re-seated himself hastily on the hall chair and drank noisily from his cup of hot tea before the policemen regained the ground-floor. They had scoured the upper storeys and the roof in vain, but from a bedroom the junior officer had secured a key which proved to fit the lock of Miller's door. Chevy heard them enter. They seemed to linger in that room longer than he had anticipated, and then, when they emerged and carefully re-locked it, Smith was left on duty in the hall while Murkins descended into the basement. In a few minutes he returned, and a moment later the hall door opened and closed again after him. Constable Smith, however, remained inexplicably behind. Chevy could hear him replying monosyllabically to a volley of questions from the restless Gibb. No; they'd seen no one. Yes, he, Smith, was left here on duty. Why? wondered the cramped occupant of the angle behind the couch.

Steps again up the basement stair; then Parker's voice. Had Brine come in yet? no? Then might he come and sit for a bit in the sitting-room and wait for news? The missus would be up too in a minute. She was just clearing up after her washing day, but she was terribly upset.

It dawned upon Chevy that he had selected for purposes of concealment the one room where all the clans intended to foregather. A tremor of dread ran through him. How on earth could he ever deal with Parker in that crowd? Discovery, as soon as anyone sat on that couch, was certain as the day. Well, he'd have to act quick, before anyone could grab him, that was all. Leap like a tiger and down his man.

Gibb and Parker entered the room together, and Gibb stooped

over the grate and put a match to the fire. It crackled up gaily. Parker sank into the easy chair situated with its back to the couch, but since Gibb happened to stand facing him with a full view of the corner, Chevy, peeping round between couch and wall, saw that to leap now was to court disaster. He lay still, listening to the two men.

'Ghastly, this is!' said Parker, using the green handkerchief. He had changed his attire, and now wore an old tweed jacket.

'You're right!' agreed Mr. Gibb cheerfully, 'it's bloody awful. Pore old chap! To be done in like that by the feller 'e'd come up to 'elp! Pitiful, that's what it is. Regular viper, that son of 'is. 'Ope they catches 'im.'

Parker should have echoed this sentiment, but did not. Chevy, smiling wryly, guessed why. Montgomery's son had seen Parker on the scene of the murder, and would certainly mention the fact. He might not be believed, but still it would be awkward for Parker. Chevy could well believe that his father's murderer wished him luck in escaping.

'Took the old boy's cash-box,' resumed Gibb. 'Wonder 'ow much 'e cleared?'

A sudden vapour of doubt assailed Chevy. Who had that cash-box? Not Parker, who had bolted empty-handed. The thought had not occurred to him before. Could there be any truth after all in the yarn Parker had spun to his wife? It seemed to be morally certain that whoever had that cash-box had murdered its owner, unless . . . perhaps some inhabitant of the house in Alfred Street had secured it during the flurry subsequent to the discovery of the body. Parker had had no time in which to enter the house. Nevertheless, something of the ice-hot fury in Chevy's veins cooled a little. The hand grasping his knife relaxed.

More steps; the voice of Mrs. Parker speaking to Constable Smith; then she too entered, white-faced, in a clean apron.

'I just come up to see what's 'appening,' she said in a weak voice. 'It don't seem bearable, down in that basement, Mr. Gibb, and Murkins 'as left the other chap 'ere with orders not to let none of us go in or out till 'e comes back. What do that mean, Jack? 'Ave they found something, do you think?'

'What should they find?' Parker sat upright with a jerk. 'I don't believe the feller come in 'ere at all! It's my belief 'e got out of the cut without anyone noticin' 'im, and 'e's miles away by this time!'

'They'll get 'im!' said Gibb, reassuringly. 'E's known to the perlice already, and that 'elps a lot. It ain't a case of an unknown murderer.'

Parker shivered violently. He appeared to be ready to weep. 'Montgom'ry!' he said, half-hysterically, 'when I thinks of pore old Montgom'ry lyin' there . . .'

'Don't!' cried Mother Parker sharply, 'I can't bear that, Jack; not from *you*!' It seemed to Chevy, peeping through his chink, that there was loathing on the woman's face. She stood trembling by the hearth, and Gibb thrust forward the second arm-chair.

'You sit down, old dear!' he said, with filial affection. 'No wonder you're feelin' bad, seein' what friends you was with 'im and all! Shove your feet in the fender and warm yourself. I told you it was turnin' cold! I'll pull up the sofa. We may as well be comfortable even if we can't be 'appy!'

Chevy braced himself for exposure. His new faint doubt of Parker's actual guilt seemed to empty him suddenly of courage. He was afraid now; hideously, anguishingly afraid. Afraid to strike the wrong man, afraid to show himself while the real murderer remained unknown. Mrs. Parker's next remark, however, gave him breathing space.

'You'd better not move that chesterfield,' she said; 'one of the legs come off this morning when I was sweepin'. It's only propped up, and I don't want ter sit down. You take that chair. I'll look out and see if Brine's coming back yet.' She walked over to the window, lifted the blind, and stared out into the street. Her restlessness seemed to infect her lodger, for he refrained from sitting down and roamed to her side. They stood peeping out at the traffic, while Parker huddled forward over the fire. Then, abruptly, his wife relinquished her post of observation to Gibb, and came back to the hearth. Husband and wife spoke in hurried whispers, which Chevy could not catch. The man shook his head.

'No!' he said aloud, 'I tells you *no*, Maggy! That chap done it, and no one else! And 'e's got away with the money, that's what 'e's done. 'E's got the money!'

The woman sat down in the chair she had just refused. In the greenish gas-light she looked like a living corpse.

'Oh Gawd!' she wept. 'If they catches 'im . . .'

'They'll 'ang 'im!' said Mr. Gibb, consolingly, sauntering back from the window. 'I'm going to 'ave another word with that



Smith. What's the idea of keepin' us all in, I wonder? *We ain't murdered nor robbed nobody!*

He roamed back into the hall. Mrs. Parker leant urgently towards her spouse.

'I cleaned yer coat,' she said in a low voice just audible to Chevy, 'and yer boots. Jack, it's lucky as you wore black boots as didn't show much; there was spots on their uppers, but none on the soles. 'Owever did *that* 'appen if yer didn't . . .'

'Shurrup!' The man's voice was fierce with hysteria. 'I dunno 'ow it 'appened, unless it was off the leaves of a plant. Can't you 'old your tongue?'

'I'll 'old my tongue if you'll tell me the 'ole truth, Jack Parker. I *got* to know the truth or I'll go mad!'

'I've *told* you the truth! I ain't sayin' nothin' more. But if you goes on talkin' like this I *shall* murder somebody, and that's a fact!'

'Well, I'd as soon be dead as livin' like this! You're a thief any'ow, even if you 'aven't stole from . . .'

'*Shurrup!*'

A horrible little silence ensued. Chevy became acutely conscious of cramp and indecision. Everything pointed to Parker's guilt, yet the first frenzy for reprisal had left Montgomery's son. He must be sure, very sure, before he struck down the wretched husband of Maggy Keggs. There was a glimmering nobility about Maggy Keggs. Her fragile spare figure seemed to loom, protective although accusing, over the creature she had married, reminding him of the love and honesty of the widow at Brixton. Like Rosie, Maggy, knowing all the truth, would protect her man. Almost Chevy had doubted Rosie, but he was sure of her now. Whatever the upshot of this evening he must try to get away to Rosie and explain all before he was captured. Love had come rather late to Chevy, but the infinite beauty of its wings swept the dust behind the leather couch. Maggy might no longer love her mate, but in spite of her words she had cleaned his coat and boots. Rosie, loving, could do no less. She would never believe him capable of murdering his own father. In the hall Mr. Gibb appeared to be conducting an animated monologue before the impassive Constable Smith. In the room the silence crouched like a frightened beast.

'Gawd!' said Mrs. Parker again at last, and her ejaculation held all the agony of prayer.

Parker, whom the tension for those few minutes seemed to have kept in a state of suspended animation, moved afresh and sighed like a man awaking. Both opened their mouths to speak, but a flurry outside and the noisy opening of the front door checked them. The hall seemed to be filled with people. Mr. Brine burst into the room, his hitherto quiet face red with excitement and running.

'They've got 'im!' he shouted. 'It wasn't Montgom'ry's son! 'Oo do yer think it is? It's *Miller!*'

'*Miller!*'

Both Parkers were on their feet. Involuntarily Chevy himself scrambled up. '*Miller!*' he shouted, rocking the aspidistra perilously.

The group swung and faced him in confusion. Constable Murkins pushed his way into the room, past the eager Mr. Gibb, who sought to re-enter at the same time.

'Ullo!' he said, 'what's all this?'

'I thought it was 'im!' babbled Chevy, 'I've been follering of 'im! 'E was there—ast 'is wife! And Miller done it all the time!'

'What yer mean?' Murkins' hand was heavy on Chevy's shoulder, as he climbed out from his corner.

'I walked into the 'ouse in Alfred Street,' said Chevy breathlessly, 'and I found my old Dad lyin' dead and 'im,' pointing at Parker, 'doing a bunk. 'E seen me, and 'e done a bunk! Ast 'im! Follered 'im in by the side winder, I did. Meant ter cut 'is throat fer what 'e done meself. And now 'e ain't done it!' He sank down on the sofa, face in hands.

'Ow'd you catch Miller?' asked Mr. Gibb, dancing impatiently. Mr. Brine answered in lieu of the police, whose interest seemed now to centre on Chevy and Mr. Parker.

'They found stolen goods as 'ad been missin' from the West End in 'is room,' explained Mr. Brine, 'and when Murkins 'ere went over to report to Inspector Anderson 'e found 'e'd just caught Miller, all over blood and 'oldin' the cash-box, 'idin' be'ind the wood-'ouse at Thirty-One. Seems Miller 'adn't gone away fer the week-end; 'e'd just meant ter rob old Montgom'ry first, but 'e met 'im as 'e come away, and 'e 'it 'im, made a bit of a mess of it, and meant ter cut 'ome and change, but Parker 'ere come unexpected into the yard by the back way, and so 'e'd only time to 'ide, and then 'e lost 'is 'ead just like Parker. 'E's owned up. All gone flat 'e 'as and 'adn't the sense ter lie.'

'I thought 'e'd done it!' wavered Parker, indicating Chevy; 'e rushed at me and I didn't wait. And then I thought it'd be fastened on me. . . . I'd touched old Montgom'ry ter see if 'e was dead, and got . . . blood on me.' He shuddered.

'Well, you'll both 'ave to come along and explain yerselves,' said Constable Murkins with decision. 'Looks to me a bit fishy. Now then, Montgomery!'

Chevy uncovered his face and rose. His eyes encountered the agonised orbs of Maggy Keggs, and he knew she was thinking of a despoiled till. He looked at her intently.

'It's all right, Mrs. Parker,' he said slowly, 'I knows what 'e told you in the 'all. *It's all right.*'

And in the flicker of her brimming eyes he knew that Maggy Parker understood his message.

### A BUNDLE OF DRY LEAVES.

'I've told you that I take an interest in pretty well everything.' . . .

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE book is a ledger, bound in green parchment. On the fly-leaf my grandfather has written :

I have taken this book for my own scrawling, because it is no longer of use for anything else. It was set aside before I came to the Library, and as on taking office the arrears for carriage were for certain reasons abandoned, I am at liberty to throw away these old accounts.

R. H., Nov. 1, 1859.

The library in question is the London Library, then as now in St. James's Square, and the writer was Robert Harrison, who in 1857 had succeeded Mr. Bodham Donne as Secretary and Librarian, continuing in these offices until 1893, when he retired. At his death, in 1897, *The Athenæum* remarked in its obituary notice that

'his long service at the London Library brought him in constant association with most of the leading literary men of the last forty years, and his experiences would have furnished material for an interesting volume of reminiscences, which he always had in his mind to compile. When, however, the leisure came to him, his strength was no longer equal to the task.'

The green ledger contains some of the raw material of which reminiscences are made ; but it would seem to have been collected with no specific end in view. My grandfather would not have been preparing for his memoirs in 1859, while the entries themselves cease in 1883. Less than half the book had then been used. Its series of jottings may indeed have been continued elsewhere ; but such a sequel has not yet come to light.

The 'scrawling,' in any case, does not constitute anything like a diary, but merely a commonplace book of anecdotes and personal experiences, set down just as events occurred, or were related, or came to mind. Many are not dated.

On the first page of the ledger, gummed over a roll of subscribers to the Library, from Abney to Ashton, is a half-sheet of notepaper giving a short list of classic speeches—Burke's, Fox's, Wyndham's, Sheridan's—with the following note :

'The above speeches are recommended by Lord Brougham in a letter to Zachary Macaulay as models which his son (the late Lord Macaulay) should study.'

Next comes a letter from his predecessor, Mr. Donne, a scholar of fine taste and quiet humour, who had now become Examiner of Plays in the Lord Chamberlain's office ; then a long newspaper article, alleged to be by Macaulay himself, on the great sale at Stowe ; and after these the first genuine entry. Dated April 5, '79, it was no doubt inserted here for chronological reasons. Mr. Jeaffreson (b. 1831) was a barrister and versatile man of letters, author, *inter alia*, of *The Real Lord Byron* and *The Real Shelley*.

'J. Cordy Jeaffreson told me the other day that he once had a brief acquaintance with the girl about whom Mr. Gladstone, some twenty years ago, interested himself so warmly that some scoundrel who was afterwards prosecuted for the crime endeavoured to extort money from the statesman by the threat of charging him publicly with immoral conduct. She was a refined, well-mannered girl, and attracted Gladstone's notice as he was leaving the Opera one rainy night. He went with her to her home, enquired into her history, and strongly advised her to quit her mode of life. He sent Mrs. Gladstone to see her next day, who invited her to their house, where she drank tea with them. The girl had been offered marriage by a foreman cabinet-maker in Oxford St., making £5 or £6 a week, but she could not make up her mind to live with a working man. She showed Jeaffreson several letters she had rec<sup>d</sup> from Gladstone urging her to marry this man and become a respectable wife, and promising her a wedding present of 50 guineas the day she did so. These letters were in official envelopes, addressed in the most open manner, so that every clerk and porter in the office was at liberty to interpret the correspondence in his own way and make his own comments. Eventually the girl did marry her honest lover, and received her 50 guineas. Those letters, if not destroyed, will be valuable to the future biographer of the great "William." It was apropos of the scandal raised about this matter that Disraeli is said to have given it his epigrammatic denial. "No! d——n the fellow! He has not one redeeming vice!"' [Under date of June, 1871, an earlier version

of the story is given, with the different ending that 'He (Mr. Gladstone) wrote to her and Mrs. Gladstone went to see her—but to no purpose.']

Called to mind, perhaps, by this, some more Disraeliana follow.

'The father of Isaac D'Israeli and grandfather of the present premier was porter to the Stock Exchange, occupying the little box at the door and bawling out the names of brokers who were wanted. The gift of calling names descended to his grandson, and helped him to rise in the world. (Cordy Jeaffreson.)'

"How do you construe the Treaty of San Stefano?" someone asked Lord Beaconsfield. "I don't construe it, I decline it," was the answer.'

"You'll be made a duke when you come back from Berlin," was said to Lord B. "A duke!" with ineffable scorn. "Why, Rutland's *that*!"'

After these casual jottings, the commonplace book proper seems to begin with an entry on October 24, 1859, recording the return of Dr. Webster from Spain, and his account of that country. [This was the Rev. Wentworth Webster (1828-1907), the Basque scholar and for a long time English Chaplain at St. Jean de Luz, who for forty-four years made his home in Spain.]

'The Govt of Spain is summed up in these words. "There are 60,000 people who pay attention to politics. There are about 20,000 Govt offices in the country. The 2 parties therefore who oppose one another continually are the 20,000 in office and the 40,000 out of office—'place' being the prize they seek."'

And with this we can let the further entries speak for themselves.

'1859. October. The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Charles Sumner, Senator for Massachusetts and victim of Brooks's brutal attack in the Senate House at Washington, and one of the foremost slavery abolitionists, was here—a fine, tall man with much talk. He says that after Westminster Abbey the Reading Room at the British Museum is the object of the highest interest to him and fills him with admiration. Westminster Abbey he regards with feelings of veneration difficult for Englishmen living under its shade to imagine. To the American it is a poem. At Althorpe Ld. Spencer took Mr. S. to the parish church (Brington) to see the tomb of Lawrence Washington, the great-great-grandfather of the im-

mortal George. (I once mentioned Washington to Carlyle. "Ah! the poor wooden-headed creature!" was his answer.)'

'Professor Baer of Petersburg Academy [the great biologist] was here to say good-bye. A shrivelled old man of 66 he is lively enough in his faculties. Agassiz the Swiss naturalist, he says, once by way of compliment sent him from the U.S. a packet of American newspapers in which he, Agassiz, had written concerning a book of Baer's. His sending the whole paper and not the cuttings made the postage 9 silver roubles (28/-). A book containing the whole thing was to be bought afterwards for 1/6.

'Longfellow the American poet illustrated the mental condition of a narrow-minded man by means of that wooden instrument which is used to expand the fingers of tight gloves. "He wants," said he, "the glove sticker putting into his mind."'

'G. H. Lewes when I said to him that Buckle's history of civilisation, as far as it goes, the 1st volume of the Introduction, proves that the author has a large amount of knowledge, replied that it was a "sprawling" kind of knowledge, that is, he meant to say, it was gathered from a vast deal of reading, but was ill held together and directed.

'R. Congreve said of the same book that it was the most immoral book he had read for some time—though it was "nuts for us" (disciples of Auguste Comte).'

[The reader may be reminded that Congreve and Frederic Harrison were the chief English upholders of Comte's Positivism.]

'Miss Evans, the author of *Adam Bede*, etc., etc., translator of Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, possesses, says Dr. Chapman (of *West Review*), one of the most massive intellects of our time. Combe the physiologist and phrenologist told him (Chapman) that he had never seen a woman's head indicative of so much power, and very few men's heads.

'She is an agreeable conversationalist, full of knowledge—but her external graces are small and few, coiffure and toilette generally being of the negligent sort.

'She was bred a Wesleyan and "turned out of her father's house" on account of her religious opinions or negations, which being of the most advanced school of freethinking make one wonder at the sketch of "Dinah."'

'1859. Nov. 1. A stranger strode into my room to enquire particulars of the Library and discoursed for about 2 hours on



all sorts of subjects, mainly on Collier's emend<sup>as</sup> to Shakespeare. The annotated folio is, he says, the greatest forgery that ever was perpetrated. Sir F. Madden who *would* not for some time look at the book from friendship to old Collier was thoroughly convinced that the only bit of originally antique writing in the volume was the additional names to the list of dramatis personæ to Henry V. On this foundation the whole edifice of fraud had been constructed. In the presence of the Duke of Devonshire, the owner of the book, a wetted handkerchief removed the brown sepia of the *seemingly* old writing and revealed the pencil marks in modern hand underneath. The Ellesmere letters are forgeries of the same flagrant character, and it is believed that if the scent were followed, many frauds going back even 30 years could be traced to the same hands. This man's energetic action and language when describing the discovery was quite striking. I must find out who he is. (Staunton the chess player.)'

'Buckle writes standing, is intent upon his work, and thinks he is as likely to finish it as any man. For he has easy circumstances, a large library, no wife or mistress, in fact nothing to care much for but his book. When he was ballotted for at the Athenæum, a suspicion that he might be blackballed by the clerical members on account of the heterodoxy in his book was met by an announcement made to the Bp. of Winchester that a sufficient number of members had resolved, in case Buckle should be blackballed, that they would blackball every Bishop, Dean, rector and curate who should stand for election for the next ten years. Not a bad story if true.'

'Herzen relating that Chefskin may be Russian Minister of Finance says that what eminence he has is due to the contrast with his late chief Kleinmichel, of whose gross ignorance the following is a specimen. He appointed to meet a General of Engineers at a certain bridge some distance from St. Petersburg at 3 o'clock on a given day. When he reached the ground no general was there. He waited a quarter of an hour in boiling fury, and when the Gen<sup>l</sup> arrived he thrust his watch at him, saying, "Three o'clock was the time fixed!" "My General," said the other in surprise, "your watch is regulated by St. Petersburg. On this meridian we are at least half an hour later." The Minister of Public Works turned away in disgust, muttering, "*Meridien!* Tout le monde aura son meridiem à lui bientôt!"'

'When Victor Emmanuel heard of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* he was sitting in Council. "Ah! the son of a cow! (a very opprobrious epithet in Italian and suited to V. E.). He has done

it at last!" Victor Emmanuel was one of the few not misled into thinking that L. N. was a weak fool. He expected him to play a fine game.'

[Motley, the historian of the *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, was one of the distinguished American men of letters chosen to represent the United States as Minister—not yet Ambassador—at a European Court.]

'At Mr. Motley's first visit before he was sent to Vienna Mr. H. Porter Smith was relating to Mr. Motley and myself a curious anecdote of Louis Napoleon which he had from his hairdresser, who was in 1848 operating on Prince Louis Napoleon in person when a boy went bawling along the street with a bundle of newspapers under his arm, "Revolution in Paris!" The Prince sprang up, ran out of the house, across the street without his hat, gave the boy 1/-, snatched a paper from him, and hurried back to read the news which had such an important bearing upon his future career.

'The Prince was a Foreign Member of the London Library, and "got up" French history in the reading room here to a considerable extent.'

'5 Jan., 1860. Mr. Huntley Gordon says at Thomas Campbell's funeral in Westminster Abbey owing to some mistake the company present was detained nearly an hour in the Jerusalem Chamber. Next to Mr. G. stood Macaulay, who kept up a stream of talk with Mr. Benj. D'Israeli and M. Van de Weyer for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour without intermission. This however was nothing to a breakfast at some Queen's Counsel's house when (the lady says) he talked from 11 o'clock till 2 without a single "flash of silence," as Sidney Smith says.

'Mr. Donne (his predecessor as Librarian, already mentioned) told me that dining with the Queen once, Macaulay was asked by Her Majesty something about a large emerald famous in India. The essayist not only gave the required information but bored the Queen to death by about 40 minutes' talk on all the emeralds that ever existed in the world. Another mark of his want of discretion or good taste was writing to his Edinburgh constituents from Windsor Castle and dating from there.

'Being once at a dinner or other party with Carlyle, a dispute arose on the subject of Henry Cromwell, Lord Deputy of Ireland, Oliver's second son, whom Macaulay calls a "debauched Cavalier." Carlyle said in all his researches among the Cromwell papers he found not a tittle of evidence for such an expression. The dispute grew warm, and Macaulay at last told Carlyle that he had coined a word wh. applied to himself, "windbag." Yet Carlyle was

perfectly right, and Macaulay wrong, as Mr. Donne proved to his informant by reference to a printed book.

'Parker the American [another eminent historian] says, a friend of his was once at Lord Carlisle's to dinner when Macaulay, Hallam, and Sir David Dundas were too. [Sir David, formerly Judge Advocate-General, had retired and lived a scholar's life, becoming a Trustee of the British Museum in 1861.] The conversation turning on the Popes, Macaulay with curiously bad taste said he could repeat the names of all the Popes seriatim. Dundas, indignant at his assumption, defied him to do it. Macaulay cooled down and said he might shirk at the "Innocents." Sir David accused him of pedantic pretension, and it required Hallam's calm authority to restore peace between the disputants.

'The only time I have seen the great man was about a fortnight before his death. He was not pleasant either in look or manner—about middle size, rather under, of ungainly thickness in the body, with a leaden complexion and grizzled hair, his manner was abrupt, and to some remark I made to him about a Dutch journal recently put into the Library he scarcely gave any answer and in an ungracious manner turned himself off. His disease, poor man, must have affected his temper very much. His heart was probably more like a sponge than anything else.

'Mr. Carlyle has been much shocked at Macaulay's death, and Sir David Dundas was one of his pall-bearers. There has been great surprise felt that the train of carriages at the funeral, which it seems to have been expected would fill Hyde Park, numbered no more than 26.

'Carlyle characterised Macaulay happily enough when he repeated the first line of the song, "Flow on thou shining river."

'Mr. W. Russell's (late *Times* correspondent) new 'Diary in India' will excite no little wrath among Anglo-Indians for some of the inaccurate stories which it repeats. It deals largely of course in condemnation of everybody in power excepting the Governor-General, Lord Canning, and the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Clyde, who seem to have flattered the correspondent not a little. The latter is reported as having said, "Mr. Russell, you shall know all that I know about my movements on condition that you mention it in your letters to England." This is rather too condescending. Not a bad anecdote is current on this subject. Russell was so enamoured of his military life that he gave himself as much as possible the look of an officer—he wore his coat braided and frogged all over the breast. A caustic officer seeing him leave the presence of the Commander-in-Chief exclaimed,

"See, they have toadied him so much that he has broken out all over in frogs!"

'Sir Charles Pasley, the old Engineer-General, came here one day, says Mr. Donne, and wanted to look at Sir G. C. Lewis's published works. After an attentive examination he said, "Well, he seems to write sensible things enough. I thought he was a fool, and came to see what he had written to get himself a name. I went with a deputation to an official interview on the subject of the decimal coinage. After we had said what we wanted to say he made his reply, from which it was evident that he thought we were talking about 'decimal fractions.' Of course I thought he must be an idiot."'<sup>1</sup>

'At Corunna Sir Charles Pasley had got his horse on board ship when the action began and did not get back in time to share in it.'

'The King's Library in the British Museum. Rev. Mr. Richards [who had been assistant in the manuscript department of the B.M. before taking Orders] said that soon after George 4th's accession the Russian Ambassador and the bibliophile Richard Heber<sup>2</sup> were dining at Windsor. The King spoke of his father's collection as having no interest for him and thought he should sell it. "If your Majesty really contemplates such a step I am sure his Imperial Majesty my master would be very happy to purchase them." The King seemed disposed to consent, and Heber went off to Lord Liverpool next morning exclaiming against such a transaction and saying it would be a scandal if the books went out of the Country. Lord Liverpool remonstrated with the King and said if H.M. would graciously *present* them to the nation, he would take care that a certain grant about to be proposed in the House of Commons should be increased by a sum equal to the value of the books. The King was gracious enough to accede to this arrangement.

'Someone else related that the late Prince Consort was very much annoyed at finding the Windsor Library gone and consulted the Law Officers of the Crown as to the propriety of recovering the books from the British Museum. He was told that such a measure would be so very unpopular that they could not recommend it.'

'Mr. G. H. Gordon says that John Phillips, R.A., the "Spanish Phillips," was brought out by his father Major Pryce Gordon

<sup>1</sup> George Cornwall Lewis was Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1855-8. He clearly did not share Lord Randolph Churchill's difficulties about the 'damned dots.'

<sup>2</sup> Richard (1773-1833) was the elder half-brother of Bishop Heber and a wealthy book-lover, called by his friend Sir Walter Scott 'Heber the magnificent, whose library and cellar are so superior to all others in the world,' and again Heber 'with volumes open as thy heart' in the Introduction to *Marmion*.

whose portrait, the second picture he ever painted, is now in Mr. G.'s room at the Stationery Office. The boy was at a carver and gilder's in Aberdeen and ordered to do some work in Major Gordon's room. There he stood, however, absorbed in the contemplation of the pictures till disturbed by the master of the lodging who after scolding him became interested and ultimately introduced him to the late Lord Panmure, who sent the young man to London and paid his expenses of living and studying till he could keep himself by his brush. Lord Panmure sent Mr. Gordon his father's portrait a few years before his death.'

'Feb. 14/66. G. H. Gordon says that on two occasions Hazlitt the essayist talked through his tube (Mr. G. is deaf) from 6 o'clock in the evening till 3 or 4 in the morning without intermission save that caused by drinking 5 or 6 basins of tea, the subject of the talk being chiefly metaphysics.'

'Herbert Spencer related the following of the Bp. of Oxford. Being pointed out to a Frenchman, the latter exclaimed, "Ah! the Bishop of Oxford—a great man—I have heard of him—he is a Wilberforce—but I am much surprised to find him in such bad smell!"'

[Doubtless this was offered as an example of the different stress of 'smell' and 'odour'—the blunt Saxon and the polite Latin.]

'From Mr. Gordon too I learn that at a dinner once at Rokeby Lord Brougham sat next to Lockhart, and the latter speaking of Brougham's novel *Albert Lunel*<sup>1</sup> surmised that it had been written by someone else and rec<sup>d</sup> only some corrections and touches from Brougham's pen. Brougham replied, "I wrote every word of it with my own hand." Mr. Gordon had this from Lockhart himself.

'*Albert Lunel* was published by C. Knight in 3 vols. in 1844. It is a dull tale of Auvergne, and Brougham suppressed the work, of which only a few copies got abroad and for their scarceness came to be highly valued. In Lowndes's *Manual*, Bohn's edition, £5.5.0 is the price put upon it, and Mr. Standish's copy was sold at Sotheby and Wilkinson's for £2.18.0. In the month of Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1863, 59 copies were offered for sale at Hodgson's, the auctioneers, and were sold at prices varying from 10/6 to 20/6. I bot<sup>d</sup> one for 18/-. There were odd lots of French and other books with Brougham's name written in them, and other evidence was adduced to show that they were a part of a clearance of his Lordship's house. Yet the old man a few days after the sale called upon Willis the bookseller to know by what right he attributed *Albert Lunel* to him!

<sup>1</sup> *Albert Lunel; or The Château of Languedoc*, 1844: republished 1872.

'Westell the books' showed me a grimy little school Livy which he had bo<sup>t</sup> at this sale with an inscription on the cover to the effect that Henry Brougham received it as a reward for his good conduct in the High School of Edinburgh in 1788. The central leaves were daubed yellow. What a span for one life to cover between the day of that scrawled, bedawbed schoolbook and now !'

'Mr. Huggins was in court and witnessed the following passage of wits between Brougham and Scarlett on a trial for libel. "The libel is proved by the handwriting," said B. "Handwriting is sometimes very significant of character, but not alway so—who for instance would take that small crabbed hand (pointing to some writing of Scarlett's on the table) as indicating the character of the great luminary who enlightens the world ?" Scarlett rose to reply, and when he came to the handwriting said in his soft, winning way, "Handwriting is indeed often significant of character. Is it not sometimes identical with character ?—as in the case of my learned friend who in writing his name (Brougham) begins *Bro* up in the air and ends with *ham* down in the deep—*always deviating from the right line*—are not the two things identical ?"'

'Oct. 25, '65. Mrs. Carlyle complains of her husband having gained nothing from his recent trip into Scotland beyond a morbid sensibility to the noise of railway whistles. At his house in Chelsea the trains from Waterloo have long been audible, but he did not notice them while engaged on his various works. Now that his occupation is gone he hears the noises and cannot sleep for them. She thinks something better than stuffing the ears with cotton might be invented to exclude sound. Going on to speak of deaf people and their trumpets, she said that Harriet Martineau used one and at their house one day Carlyle was talking to her while suffering from a cold in the head which made the water run from his nose. Mrs. C. amused herself by watching the trickling stream and speculating on the effect of a drop getting into the trumpet. If it reached the tympanum of the listener the effect she thought would be something like the crack of doom. At least the attitude of these three persons would make a picture that posterity would like to see.'

'Carlyle spoke of the loss of his wife as being the same as if he had lost his skin—she was everything to his comfort.'

'Mr. Thackeray was found dead in his bed on the morning of Thursday the 24th Dec./63 and he is to be buried in Kensal Green cemetery on Wednesday Dec. 30/63. He died from an



effusion on the brain, and was always subject to periodical "bilious attacks"—a stoppage of the biliary duct he called it when talking to me one day. He had an attack at Bradford about 7 years ago on the very night he was expected at Leeds to deliver one of his lectures on "The 4 Georges." We were talking of that incident<sup>1</sup> when he told me of the disorder, which however he thought he could always master by means of calomel. He told Mrs. Coulson (the surgeon's wife) when dining at their house in the Regent's Park some months ago that he drank not less than 500 bottles of wine a year, for when at home he drank one bottle to dinner and when out, which he often was, he drank more. He was, I believe, a great frequenter of the Garrick Club where he invariably (as my informant saith) finished the evening, wherever he might previously have been, with gin and water. He was a tall, broad-shouldered, strong-looking man, with a broad face and small turn-up nose which gave a comical expression to a face otherwise full of power and goodness. I was fascinated by his face and shall not soon forget it. His abundant white hair scarcely made him look old, for his manner and speech were bright, short and blunt. He died at the age of 52, having been born in Calcutta in 1811.

"I wish you would be my father," he said one day to Mr. Donne (my predecessor), "for I have used up my good old father" (in his novels). It is said that he was fond of speculating and lost 2 or 3 small fortunes in American Railway shares.

'Winwood Reade met Alfred Austin at Florence. They each have a novel in the press and the heroine in both books is a Florentine woman. No love seems lost between them, and one is rejoicing in the prospect of criticising the other's novel. At a dinner at Florence the health of literary men was drunk and thanks given by Reade as Austin had already spoken. He alluded to Austin as his senior in literature. A few nights afterwards they met again and Austin wanted an explanation of the term, asking how old Reade was. "27," was the reply. "Then I am older," said Austin, "for I am 30." "I said senior in literature," retorted Reade, "and no more meant that you were my senior in any other way, than that I should think you my superior in stature." Austin is very short, while Reade is nearly six feet high.'

'Talking lately with Huxley the Professor about Mr. Murphy's book on *Habit and Intelligence* and his promised book on "The Scientific Basis of Faith," I said Coleridge foresaw the day when faith and reason would become identical. H. shook his head, intimated that the day was a long way off and that he agreed with

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Harrison was Librarian at Leeds Old Library at that time.



Carlyle's estimate of Coleridge's philosophy—that it was “moonshine.” Carlyle, he added, is a strange mixture of Scotch Puritanism and Goethe—a man of genius and a poet for all that.’

In the next entry, after describing a visit to Salisbury during Easter, 1869, and a luncheon at Wilton House, where Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were then staying, my grandfather notes :

‘Count Strelezcki<sup>1</sup> seemed very thick with Gladstone, engaging him in the lobby and walking out with him along the road.

‘A week after we came home Mr. Gladstone came into the Library to make a reference to Pausanias and to Propertius. He was correcting proofs. The line he wanted in Propertius could not be found, and repeating it to Mr. Marriott (a master at Eton) who happened to be in the room, he asked him where it was. He did not know. It turned up at last in Tibullus, and when Mr. Gladstone read it the difference was considerable between the line repeated by the Premier and that in the text. “How one’s memory does cheat one!” observed he. “His line,” said Mr. Marriott to me afterwards, “was much finer than the original.” I forget the words, but if the proofs he had were those of his announced work, *Juventus Mundi*, I shall find the line and enter it here. What a man to amuse himself with literary composition while throwing all his strength into the conduct of the Irish Church Bill! He looked very well at Wilton, and when the ladies were trying to persuade him to take a glass of wine, he resisted gently, saying, “At my age I must not do such things.” I did not sit at the same table with him and do not know if he took wine at all during the luncheon. Everybody seemed charmed with him. The old servant who showed us thro’ the rooms said that Mr. Gladstone and family were always down to prayers at 6 o’c., which could not be said of all the visitors.’

‘Bulwer Lytton and G. H. Lewes met in my room. The former was at first unconscious of the other’s presence, in revenge for which Lewes took pains to tell the author of *A Strange Story*, then being published in a serial, that he had made a mistake in calling Bois-Reymond a Frenchman since he was a German Professor of Chemistry in Berlin. The great man (M.P. and Rt. Hon.) bore the snub, before me too, without wincing.’

‘Young Arthur Williams the barrister, speaking of old Crawshay the great ironmaster of Merthyr Tydvil,<sup>2</sup> says that in his

<sup>1</sup> The Count (1796–1873) was of Polish birth but British education, and later naturalised. A notable explorer of Australia, he was elected F.R.S. for his scientific, and created K.C.M.G. for his public, work.

<sup>2</sup> This was William Crawshay (1788–1867). Of his surviving sons Henry inherited the Forest of Dean property, Francis the Treforest estates, and Robert Thompson the great ironworks.

old age he was persuaded to give up his business to his sons and met them (they were three in number) in London to execute the deed of transference. "Well, boys!" said the old man, "here we are to settle matters, but first of all, let us have a good dinner and go to the play." They all went accordingly to one of the theatres, where as luck would have it, *Lear* was being performed. Old Crawshay must have paid particular attention to Shakespeare that night, for as the party returned home he, after a little meditation, exclaimed—"You want me to sign that deed? I'll see you d—d first!"

'Oct. 13/69. Mr. W. White of the H. of C. (door) told me to-day of a pretty little scene enacted in Grasmere churchyard this summer. White seeing a car cross the bridge at Kirk Allan with a party that included Mr. Bright, went to meet him and point out the tombs. The Minister of Commerce was astonished and pleased to see him. Standing at Wordsworth's grave he said, "A friend of mine tells me that Wordsworth is the greatest English poet since Milton. What do you think?" "Well, that is a question not to be hastily answered: he certainly was a very great poet." "Do you think him greater than Byron? (Hear Quaker John!) Has he anything equal to the 4th Canto of 'Childe Harold'?" At Hartley Coleridge's grave Bright related the following anecdote:—"Forty years ago a friend of mine was in the inn yonder when Hartley Coleridge rushed into the room looking very wild and seizing a pen wrote some lines on a sheet of paper and rushed out again, leaving them behind. My friend took a copy and I don't think they have ever been printed. I will repeat one or two for you. They were on the sinlessness of nature as contrasted with the pollution of man." Then stroking down his face and laying his forefinger on his forehead after his wont, Bright repeated the line in his fine tones with a hand extended over poor Hartley's grave. It was a fine picture. The rest of the party had gone on, leaving these 2 grey-headed politicians alone. As he remounted the car, extending his hand to White he said, "Good-bye! We shall meet again, but not in scenes of tranquil beauty like this."

'Nov./69. I complained to a clergyman the other day that the new Dean of St. Paul's, Mansel, was a very bad preacher and had bored us to death with his sermon in the Parish Church. He replied that nevertheless he was a man of wonderful wit and humour, and gave the following instance. Someone remarked in Mansel's presence that Miss Martineau was very dogmatic. "Dogmatism," said the Doctor, "is very bad, but Bitchmatism is intolerable." Strong and wholesome Doctorism, but not delicate.'

'King's (?) *English Proverbs* (1768). "Bells call others to church, but enter not in themselves."

'Pius the Ninth when speaking to some English people about Dr. Pusey applied the above proverb (consciously or unconsciously) when he said, "He is like a bell, he rings people into the Church (of Rome) but does not enter himself."

'R. C. Saunders says that about 1838 he used to meet the writer of that article in the *Quarterly* which is fancifully supposed to have "killed" John Keats. It was in the quiet parlour of a tavern in Maiden Lane where editors, reporters and the like used to congregate. The man was an Irishman named Russell. Mr. Burney, a magistrate in Australia, son of Sir Richard Burney, London Police Magistrate, took Saunders to the place of meeting, and if alive will give further particulars.'

'Dr. Webster [the writer on Spain already mentioned] says (21 March, 1870) that he knew Joseph Hume who was a fellow-townsmen of his tho' before his time, and in London one of his patients. Hume's rise began in an odd way. His mother sold crockery in Montrose and on market days made a display of her "pigs," as the Scotch call mugs, in the market place. On one occasion the late Lord Panmure, then Mr. Maule, was looking out of the hotel with Fletcher Reid and others when he laid a bet that by putting his handkerchief to his nose he would make Mrs. Hume break all her pigs. This he did and won his bet, having previously concerted the matter with Mrs. Hume and bought her stock of crockery. From that time he took notice of little Joe, sent him to school and to Edinburgh University, got an appointment for him in India, and when he became a rich man he had him returned to Par<sup>t</sup> for Montrose.

'Another piece of luck Hume had was on a canvas for a Directorship of the E. India Company. When he called upon an E. India proprietor named Burney who lived in Brunswick Square the old gentleman was rather crusty and gruffly told Hume he should not give him his vote. Hume bowed and retired, but Mr. Burney's daughter reproached her father for having been rude to the stranger. Sorry for this, Mr. Burney apologised to Hume the next time they met and invited him to his house. An intimacy ensued which ended in Hume getting in Miss Burney an excellent wife together with a fortune of £70,000.

'Downey, a Tory Scotch Member, crossed the House one night and addressing Hume said, "Vote for my job to-night, and I'll vote for yours when it comes on!" Whether the prince of public economists agreed to this proposition or not, is not on the records.'

'Mr. Gladstone said to me not long ago (this is April, 1877) that Hume was a man who had done great service to his country which had never been duly recognised. He worked at the subjects he took up in Parl<sup>t</sup> like a merchant or banker working at his business—kept several clerks to get at his facts, and thoroughly sifted all the abuses he exposed. Williams, the M.P. for Lambeth, who was thought to be Hume's successor, was a poor hand in comparison and used to be called "Smollett"—i.e. a bad continuation of Hume.'

'John Forster [the friend and biographer of Dickens] made a funny display of temper on Monday (9 May, 1870) in Comtee. [of the London Library]. Five members were down as not having attended once the whole year. One of the number, Carlyle, never has attended in my time, but his name is retained on the list as a compliment to him and as an honour to the Lib<sup>y</sup>. Forster wanted to retain first all, then at least 3 out of the 5. Herbert Spencer objected, and thought that 3 new men sho<sup>d</sup> be proposed and that 3 old ones who had not attended sho<sup>d</sup> go out. The discussion continued and it was proposed to put the question to the vote. Hereupon Forster got up and moved to the door. Someone called him back to vote on the question. He said no, he did not want to participate in a division on a matter that had always been arranged in a friendly manner. After a speech from the doorsill he returned to his seat and the talk went on. Spencer insisted "on principle" on having 3, and said that a friendly arrangement without a division seemed to mean the acceptance of Mr. F.'s proposition. The motion was made and seconded. Forster left the room, and all the rest but one voted with Spencer. I heard a good story of Forster afterwards. He and Tennyson were in a cab which having set down Forster proceeded with Tennyson. When the Laureate got down the driver touched his hat and said, "Beg pardon, sir, but that gent as got out often drives with me and pays liberal. Would you mind telling me of his name, sir?" "Oh, that is Mr. Forster," says the poet. "Mr. Forster," echoed the cabman, and after a pause, "He's a harbi-trary cove, sir!"'

'1 Oct./70. A good pun from Mr. Donne. When I said I hoped the folios would increase in quantity until they drove me out of my rooms here to a house in the country, he said, "You want to exfoliate."'

'Mr. Cecil Monro was in Lord Cairns' house when he heard from Mr. Glasse that the hubbub about Lord Chelmsford's dismissal from the Woolsack by Disraeli was quite unfounded, for

Chelmsford accepted the office on the distinct understanding that he would retire whenever Disraeli wished to have the place for Cairns. Chelmsford quite forgot the conditions and with many of his friends was very indignant at being turned out. Meeting Lord Westbury soon after the event, Lord Chelmsford said, "Well, Westbury, you and I may shake hands now, I think." "Oh, no!" simpered the other. "By no means. It took the House of Commons a whole day to turn me out, but you have been kicked out by a damned Jew!"

'April 1/71. I have sometimes fancied a connection between words I have let fall in conversation and certain public events, and as the importance of the infinitely little in the physical world is now recognised by naturalists and philosophers, I wonder whether this connection has any existence further than in my fancy. When the affair of "The Trent" took place, and Lord Palmerston showed a readiness for war with the United States unless their Government restored the two Southern Commissioners who had been seized, I was one day helping Dr. Phillimore, then Queen's Advocate, [who said something] which I saw bore upon the international question of boarding the neutral English vessel and seizing the two passengers. I felt keenly for the difficulties of the Northerners in their war against slaveholders, and said I hoped we should not go against them, as it was hard to hit them when they were down. "Oh, but they don't think themselves down," said he, and went off. Did that little word in season, I wonder, modify in even the slightest degree his report to the Gov<sup>t</sup> and soften any asperity that might otherwise have been written and have tended to widen the breach between the two governments? If it did, here is another proof of the usefulness of the infinitely little.

'Again, last year, in conversation with M. Bartolomei, secretary to the Russian Embassy here, in conning over the news of the Franco-Prussian War, I asked what Russia would do. Would she make for Constantinople, now that our French ally was crippled? If she did, I continued, Englishmen would not, I thought, care much about it. "Do you think they would?" "That is for you to say," he replied, laughing, "not me." Did that chance expression of mine set the Russian diplomatist on a track of thought and enquiry that communicated to headquarters resulted finally in the offensive circular about the neutralisation of the Black Sea, which for a time threatened war between England and Russia and brought about the Conference which secured to Russia what she wanted in a quiet, legitimate way? It is possible, but if so the infinitely little remark was less what I would have had it than the specimen given above.'

'June 10/71. Mr. Brookfield relates of Carlyle the following as an instance of his distaste for "scientific" men. Being at Lady Ashburton's in the country with a company of philosophers, Grove, Tyndall and others, B. and C. went about midnight into the conservatory to smoke. The moon was shining brightly on the lemon trees when Grove and some others came in evidently for the purpose of having a chat. "A splendid moon!" Mr. Carlyle breaks in on them—"Aye, poor old girl, she has been hanging about this old planet of ours, off and on, a good many centuries now." And so in a delicate way he put science off the *tapis* with a stroke.'

'June 22/72. To-day was sold at Sotheby's among Lord Selsey's books Gower's *Confessio Amantis* printed by Caxton 1493 (*pro* 1483). Notes on the fly-leaves show that it belonged to Edw<sup>d</sup> Harley, Earl of Oxford, and was sold at a public sale by J. Osborne Feb. 15/1745 for 14/-. When Hearne examined the volume March 8, 1714-15, he pronounced it the most perfect copy he had seen. His own copy wanted some leaves, and was worth, he thought, a guinea, but this one he deemed worth more than 2 guineas. That testimony was endorsed by J. Urry. To-day Walford the bookseller gave £670 for the volume!'

'Sept./72. Story of J. S. Mill told me by J. Coningham of Brighton. When he came to support Fawcett at the election for Brighton against Coningham, the latter who as a cousin of John Sterling's had known Mill long ago was very mad and wrote a letter in which he applied to the philosopher the term that had been applied to Macaulay, "a book in breeches." As a placard the letter did not get Brighton for Coningham, but it helped to lose Westminster (where it was largely posted) for Mill. Some time after when Mill's book on women came out he sent a copy to Coningham with the remark, "Here is a book not in breeches."'

'Dec. 4/73. One day last week Tennyson the Laureate went with W. Allingham [the poet], "Laurence Blomfield," to see Dr. Lynn the conjuror at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. They are both very self-conscious men but dread to show it, tho' imagining the world's eye to be always on them. The Laureate especially is morbidly sensitive about strangers noticing him in any way or drawing attention to him. Conjurors however know no distinctions, and Lynn, who probably did not know his visitor by sight, walked up to him and asking what he had in his beard, seemed to pull out an egg therefrom, then another from his ear—the poet's ear!—and so drew the amazed attention of the whole



audience to the author of the "Idylls." Fancy his horror and disgust !'

'Dec./73. Ruskin sent two coloured drawings to the (old) [Watercolour] Society in Pall Mall—one a tower, the other the base of a pillar. The latter having no shade in it puzzled the hangers so much that they hung it the wrong way up. Happily the subversion was discovered at the private view.'

'June 15/74. "We should have been glad to see you in the chair at our annual meeting," said I to Carlyle to-day. "I never could bear the thought of a general meeting," replied he. "If it were a meeting of archangels that I had to preside over I should just say, 'Good morning, gentlemen, I have nothing more to say to you. Settle the matter among yourselves.'"—Speaking of Ruskin he said, "Ruskin is full of the sacred fire. He just says to mankind in general, 'You're all a set of d—d scoundrels. Go to H—— with you !'" and he puffed out his mouth as if blowing. He did not pronounce the last objectionable word but left it to be understood.'

Here is affixed a cutting from the *Daily News* of May 12, 1875, headed 'Suicide at the London Library.'

'Much consternation was occasioned yesterday afternoon shortly before five o'clock by the report of firearms at the London Library, St. James's Square. On some person entering the magazine room, a gentleman was discovered lying on the floor with a pistol by his side. The apparently lifeless body was recognised as that of Mr. Leigh Hunt, a son of Mr. Thornton Hunt. Etc., etc.'

'When called to see the dying man I found brains and blood oozing from his forehead and that there was no hope of saving his life. He was in strong convulsions. I sent off for a policeman and ran myself for Dr. Tegart whose assistant came in 5 minutes, and in a quarter of an hour the unhappy suicide was removed to Charing Cross Hospital where he died 2 hours later (at 7 o'clock). The inquest was held at the hospital on Friday the 14th. I was talking to Mr. Carlyle in my room when first called away by the terrified clerk. Coming in hastily for my hat, I told Mr. C. what had happened. He showed no symptom of emotion but went to the next room asking for his book (he wanted the second vol. of Motley's *Dutch Republic*). He went up to the first floor and then announced the occurrence and said, as was reported to me, "Another of Thornton Hunt's bastards gone." This if true is simply revolting, considering the intimacy that had existed between him and Leigh Hunt the elder. I asked



Mr. Samuel Butler, who heard him, if those were the words used, and he replied, "something to that effect." In order to get the book Mr. C. wanted the assistant had to reach over the dying man's body for the steps. This of course was not known to Mr. C. Note.—The book young Hunt brot with him to the L.L. as done with was Lewes's *Problems of Life and Mind*, Vol. 1. He was fond of that sort of reading and acute in matters of the kind, but had no practical ability and having failed in two or three endeavours to obtain employment, he was tired of being a burden to his mother and friends, so shot himself. He fired twice, hit himself both times, recharging the pistol, which was a Derringer and had to have the barrel reversed, after the first bullet had fractured his skull. Those who heard the two explosions say there was an interval of 5 minutes between.'

'Sept. 21/83. Sir James Ramsey, a guest with Mr. Gladstone of Sir D. Currie's, called at the Library to-day on his way from the *Pembroke Castle*, which landed Mr. Gladstone and its other passengers this morning at Gravesend. Sir James was in a tweed suit and knickerbockers, hardly suited to London, wh. he explained by saying he had taken as sufficient for a cruise, together with an evening suit in case there should be dressing for dinner. This last fashion was left to people's taste. The host Sir Donald Currie did not dress for dinner and many followed his example. Tennyson was "great fun" to most of the company. At dinner he sat next to Gladstone, talking chiefly about Homer. The Premier teased him one day by saying he could not be a poet of the highest order because he was never sea-sick, which showed a want of sensibility. The poet had a little smoking-room on deck to himself every day for half an hour after breakfast and after dinner "for meditation." When Sir Jas. R. went in one day to read a book at that hour, the Laureate said, "It was the Captain's wish I should have the place to myself for half an hour." Tennyson read some of his poetry to the company daily. His manner of reading is a musical monotone till he comes to words allowing of dramatic expression, as for example an echo of the word "die." He expressed it "die—die—die," gradually softening his tone to a whisper. When the Czar came on board the *Pembroke Castle*, accompanied by his wife, the King and Queen of Denmark, the King of the Hellenes, and other royal personages, Tennyson mingled among them without ceremony of introduction. A pretty little lady came up to him and said in foreign English, "I have read your poetry, Mr. Tennyson, it is very pretty." "Ah! my dear," was the reply, accompanied by a *patting on the lady's shoulder*, "I'm very glad you like it." The lady was the Empress of Russia.

The familiarity seems to have given no offence, for the poet afterwards, at their request, read to the royalties, one of whom asked if he would not like his pipe. "No, I never smoke when reading," he grandly answered.'

'When the Bill of Abolition of Church Rates was being read in the H. of C. Mr. Bright was standing in the lobby near Mr. White, who said, "Do you notice that the Bill is being read the 3rd time without a word of opposition?" "That only shows," replied B., "that the devil may come out of a body without rending it."'

'After Disraeli had compared the Whigs to extinct volcanoes, Lord Hartington asked in the lobby what he meant. "He means," said an Irish member, "that you are used-up craters."'

With this example of that form of humour which Dr. Johnson condemned, these *memorabilia*, superimposed upon accounts for carriage, portorage and catalogues, come to an end. There remain in the book, however, jotted down on loose scraps of paper, a few more *jeux d'esprit*: and to take leave of my grandfather in his lighter vein, indulging, amid the rather solemn shades of Gladstone, Mill and Herbert Spencer, his propensity for the infinitely little, these may serve for a tailpiece.

'Mr. Freeland has turned the following into 7 diff<sup>t</sup> languages, Gr., Lat., Fr., Germ., Italian, Swedish, and Chinese!'

'I have lost my portmanteau!'

'I pity your grief.'

'My sermons were in it.'

'I pity the thief!'

The curate's eyes the ladies praise.

The reason why I can't divine.

He closes them whene'er he prays,

And when he preaches closes mine.

'By what part of a lady's dress did the Bp. of Oxford (now Winchester) designate the two best preachers of the day? Hook and eye.'

'What is the correct designation of the wife of a Canon? A needle gun.'

'The Bp. of Oxford is credited with saying that the first thing the ladies do on coming into chapel is to look at the *hims*.'

## A BUNDLE OF DRY LEAVES.

'Here lie the bones of Robert Lowe.  
 Whither he's gone I do not know.  
 If to the realms of peace and love,  
 Farewell to happiness above!  
 But if he's gone to a lower level,  
 I must compassionate the Devil!'

'If a man should through comets and galaxies travel  
 And all nebulous films should essay to unravel,  
 He'll find though he search to the depths of infinity  
 That God's greatest work is the Master of Trinity.  
 DR. ROGET.'

[The then Master was Whewell.]

'A noble lord's *ultima domus*. Collins' pencil lines below.'

'Did he who wrote upon this wall  
 Believe or misbelieve St. Paul?  
 Who says, where'er it is or stands  
 There is another house not made with hands.  
 Or do we gather from these words  
 That house is not a house of Lords?'

DOUGLAS G. BROWNE.\*

[\* I should like to acknowledge the great help I have received from the Editor, who has been good enough to supply almost all the references inserted in brackets or in the notes.—D. G. B.]

### LITERARY ACROSTICS.

A LITERARY ACROSTIC is published every month, and the Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers two prizes to the most successful solvers. The winners will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. If several solvers send solutions of equal merit, the two whose answers are opened first will win the prizes.

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 100.

'True friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,  
Welcome the coming, ——— the parting ———.'

1. 'Good people all, of every sort,  
Give ear unto my ———,  
And if you find it wond'rous short,  
It cannot hold you long.'
2. 'Let observation with extensive view  
Survey mankind, from China to ———.'
3. 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be;  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the ——— of husbandry.'
4. 'Where perhaps some Beauty lies,  
The Cynosure of neighb'ring ———.'
5. 'There lives more faith in honest ———,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.'

*N.B.*—Owing to the Christmas holidays, the next number of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE will be published a few days earlier than usual, and it follows that less time can be allowed for solving No. 100. Competitors are requested to note that their answers must arrive not later than December 15.

## RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page xxv of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue; and he must be careful to give also his real name and address.
4. Solvers should not write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
5. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
6. Answers to Acrostic No. 100 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50 Albemarle Street, London, W.1., and must arrive not later than December 15. No answers will be opened before this date.

## ANSWER TO No. 99.

1. L earnin G
2. A mbe R
3. T al E
4. I gnoranc E
5. N ote-boo K

PROEM: Cowper, *Tirocinium*.

Ben Jonson, *Underwoods*. 12. *To the Memory of my beloved Master William Shakespeare.*

## LIGHTS:

1. Pope, *Essay on Criticism*.
2. Milton, *L'Allegro*.
3. Johnson, *Vanity of Human Wishes*.
4. Gray, *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*.
5. Shakespeare, *Julius Cæsar*, iv, 3.

Acrostic No. 98 ('State of Denmark') was taken entirely from Shakespeare, and a good proportion of the answers sent in were correct. The prizes are won by Mrs. Jerram, The Warren, Polperro, Cornwall, and Mrs. Waller, Masongill House, Ingleton, Yorkshire; these two winners will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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